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# COUNT VON MOLTKE'S LETTERS

TO HIS MOTHER AND HIS BROTHERS.

VOL. I.





# LETTERS

FIELD-MARSHAL  
COUNT HELMUTH VON MOLTKE

TO  
HIS MOTHER AND HIS BROTHERS

TRANSLATED BY  
CLARA BELL AND HENRY W. FISCHER

*WITH ILLUSTRATIONS*

IN TWO VOLUMES  
VOL. I.

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# Moltke

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I.

Count von Moltke's Letters

• *TO HIS MOTHER.*

(1823—1837.)





HENRIETTE VON MOLTKE.

FRAU HENRIETTE VON MOLTKE, the Field-Marshal's mother, was the daughter of Finanzrath Paschen, and born at Lübeck, on February 5th 1777. Her father, belonging to one of the first families of that Hanseatic town, was a merchant of importance, with extensive connections, by which he and his family gained a larger and broader view of life. Henriette was admirably brought up by her stepmother, and was a charming and highly educated girl of twenty when she made the acquaintance of Friedrich Philipp Victor von Moltke, at that time a remarkably handsome young lieutenant, and immediately fell in love with him. Her prudent father was opposed to the marriage; but what Henriette had once made up her mind to, her determined nature clung to for life; and

after a short engagement she married the husband of her choice, in May 1797.

Frau von Moltke is described as a woman of medium height, a good figure and proud, repellent manners. Large, intelligent eyes, an aquiline nose, firmly set lips, and waving, powdered hair, gave her face an unusually marked individuality. But though she was reserved and grave, almost stern, she had a passionate nature and a tender, faithful heart. Her understanding was excellent; she was mistress of several languages, and expressed herself in writing, even in moments of the deepest agitation, with equal clearness and brevity. Her soul was animated by deep Christian feeling. This is evident in a letter to her son Adolf, of January 14th 1830: "May you ever more and more acknowledge the hand of God, even if He lay it on you in trial. A pure faith and firm confidence give courage and strength in every situation in life. What if we lack honours and temporal blessings? They are all perishable and there is no permanent good but the consciousness of duty fulfilled. This may God grant you!"

Gifted with a fine voice, she loved music and poetry, and a life of sunshine, such as was her lot for but a short time.

After the first happy years of her married life, misfortunes, loss of money, and anxieties began.

Her husband, who was in the Danish Army, was constantly absent, and the house and buildings on an estate he had purchased in Holstein were burnt to the ground. At that time Frau von Moltke had the strength of mind and body to nurse the child of her bailiff as well as her own for three months, the infant's mother having fallen sick with alarm at the fire, soon after its birth. He is now an old man of eighty-six.

Her whole being was greatly affected by the fact that, as time went on, she and her husband understood each other less and less, and lived apart. But her energy only gained fresh impetus to devote herself with increased conscientiousness and fidelity to her eight children. Though accustomed from her youth to wealth and comfort, no sacrifice was too great for her; she gave up everything to give her children the best possible education. And she was so happy as to see them all develop nobly, and to be venerated by them with an affection which kept her memory alive in transfigured beauty long after her death. She lived at Preetz till 1832; then, her youngest daughter Augusta having married Herr Burt, she removed to Schleswig.

She died as she had lived, heroically. She concealed her malady, which was complicated with symptoms of dropsy, with unfailing determination from all her children. On the last evening of her

life, her daughter Helene (Frau Pröpstin Bröker), on returning from a party, found her at her writing-table in a room where the fire had gone out. She silenced an affectionate remonstrance as to taking better care of herself with a good-night kiss, and next morning her daughter found her on the floor, dying of an apoplectic stroke. Thus she departed, May 27th 1837 ; while her son Helmfuth, whose character in many important points resembled hers, was on the distant shores of the Bosphorus.

## COUNT VON MOLTKE'S LETTERS TO HIS MOTHER.

Frankfort on the Oder,<sup>1</sup> June 5th, 1823.

DEAR MOTHER,

As Ludwig is setting off on the journey which he so ardently desires, and to which I look back with so much pleasure, I give him these lines for you. I can vividly imagine the joy which his presence in Preetz will cause, and he will be no less happy to be there. Your pretty little garden must produce a quantity of strawberries and peas : here the season is over and I have had but few. If I can get it finished, I will enclose a little sketch of a mill not far from Frankfort to which I sometimes walk ; I only beg, in exchange, for the unfinished sketch of Preetz which I left behind. Also you will

<sup>1</sup> Helmuth von Moltke was at this time lieutenant in the Fusilier battalion of the 8th (Life) Infantry ; the 1st battalion was at Lübben, the 2nd at Guben.



do me a great pleasure by sending me a little lock of your hair, and of Lena's, Gusta's and Vips'.<sup>2</sup> I have a locket in which I shall wear them. I look forward to Ludwig's return for much news of you all. Whether I shall get into the Staff-college in the autumn is still uncertain; it depends on whether my work places me among the best fifty out of sixty-eight men. We exercise at least once every day. In the evening I go to bathe with some of the others. The best swimmers can swim across the Oder, which is now much swollen by the rains, and has overflowed the meadows on the banks. Then we go to the Kirschberge, and eat cherries or sour milk, and sometimes both. Have you any cherries yet in your garden? On the 24th of this month the other two battalions are to come here, and then we shall exercise in earnest; and on the 12th August three more battalions arrive, with artillery and Jägers. Then we shall have to march a mile [about 4.681 English miles] out to the exercising ground. Finally, on September

<sup>2</sup> The different members of the family alluded to in these letters may be identified by a reference to the pedigree attached to this volume. *Vips*, is Victor.

2<sup>nd</sup>, we go to Berlin, where about 30,000 men will be quartered. Best love to my sisters and Vips. Forgive this hastily written letter: often think of your  
HELMUTH.

Ober-Salzbrunn, August 15th, 1825.

DEAR MOTHER,

Although it is not long since I last wrote, I will no longer deprive myself of the pleasure of beginning another letter. I yesterday received by Ludwig your welcome letter of July 23<sup>rd</sup>. How glad I always am to get a peep into your quiet home, so utterly unlike my life here. You are certainly right in saying that the peace of mind you now so deservedly enjoy is the only true happiness for which we need strive. And how often has my sore heart longed for it, when disappointed hopes, sickness, or enmity have crushed all my vital courage. But this is a malady of my youth. It is only after going through storms that peace is precious, nor may we have it before. Here I am collecting fresh strength for life. Fate has given me so little cause for complaint that it would be really unpardonable in me to complain, were it not

that physical peculiarities make me particularly susceptible to melancholy impressions. However, from my former experience I have reason to hope that the waters will do me good service. And then I will set out with new courage on the thorny race-course on which I am striving after fortune, alone, and so far from you all. May I attain it for you all !

There is a young girl here worthy to be your daughter-in-law. She is a Gräfin Reichenbach. She is lovely and well-educated ; you would take her to your heart. But unluckily she has no fortune. The very antipodes may be found among some Polish acquaintance, very grand folks and very rich. I do not know whether you have ever had much to do with Poles ; nothing can be pleasanter ; you are made at home at once, at once a friend and an intimate. They load you with such kindness and courtesy as Germans would call importunate. They are all alike in this, and highly educated, entertaining and gay ; and yet I should not like to give you a Polish daughter-in-law.

I have had a pressing invitation to visit Poland,

from a Starostin Obrocziowska.<sup>3</sup> This lady brings her own man-cook with her ; you dine off silver at her table ; she speaks French perfectly, has very pretty daughters, and is the gayest old lady I have ever seen. But my finances, which are sadly reduced by my journey to Dresden, and above all by paying off my Berlin bills, require the strictest economy. I am lucky in having a harbour of refuge with my friend von Frobel at Glatz, where I may stay for a time at no cost. I am afraid that I can only afford the expense of this month at the baths, at most ; for I must keep enough for the return journey.

It is long since I have liked any place so well as this, and that may be doing me as much good as the waters. I have wine and a carriage almost for nothing, for Colonel Count Wartensleben, my father's friend, who has twice been to see me, has taken quite a fancy to me, which is unlike him as a rule. I drive out almost every day in his elegant droschky to one of the beautiful old forts or castles, of which one can never see enough here. Lately

<sup>3</sup> Thus spelt in the letter ; but whether this is the correct spelling is uncertain.

we made an excursion by water underground, which is perhaps unique in the world. Imagine a vault 1000 fathoms in length, partly blasted out of the rock, but only four feet in width and scarcely more in height, winding for hundreds of feet, beneath hills, villages, and brooks. The bottom is covered, to a depth of about three feet, with water which is fed by subterranean springs, and kept up by a sluice. The boat in which you navigate this Styx is almost as wide as the channel. The light of day soon disappears, and in spite of the numerous lamps in the boat, total darkness reigns, till the eye becomes accustomed to it. Then the black anthracite, blocks of granite and trickling streams become visible, and from time to time a little dock or bay to enable boats to pass. The air is chill but pure. Summer and winter are unknown; even thunder is inaudible. On the return, the first sight of the opening in the distance is particularly beautiful. The semicircular arch looks exactly like the setting sun, and is mirrored all along the smooth track of water. On emerging one is quite blinded. We went the other day to Adersbach. What struck me as most beautiful in this

strangely shaped hill of sandstone was a high waterfall, tumbling down a narrow rift into a deep dark cave, to be entered only through one cleft in the rock.

I received your welcome letter of the 23rd the day before yesterday, and read it all with the greatest delight.

September 6th.—The delightful time I have spent here in Salzbrunn is now a thing of the past, and to my great grief I must leave. I shall never regret having been here. The trip has done me great good and I have made several pleasant acquaintances, some of whom I shall continue to see in Berlin. I tear myself with regret from such a lovely neighbourhood and so many kind people, who have made me so welcome. As there is still a month to spare before the Staff-college opens, my plan is as follows: I go to Breslau on the 14th, whether I shall before that ascend Schneekoppe<sup>4</sup> with Count Reichenbach is uncertain. In Breslau I shall stay with a Count Wartensleben, an uncle of my

<sup>4</sup> The highest peak of the Riesengebirge. Murray gives the height as 5250 feet.

friend, with whom I am going to drive in his carriage, on the 17th, to Rusko, not far from Krotchin in Poland, to spend a few days with Frau von Obrocziowska. At the end of the month we return to Breslau. From thence I go to Glatz to stay for a fortnight with my friend Von Frobels, and with him I return to Berlin on October 15th.

September 13th.—I set out for Breslau tomorrow morning. I have made the excursion to the Riesengebirge. It began under bad auspices, but was brought to a happy issue. The state of my finances was as low as the barometer; however, all turned out well. At six in the morning I started with young Reichenbach for Waldenburg. There a vehicle was waiting to carry us to Landeshut, and thence we proceeded by the mail to Schmiedeberg. Just before entering this town the road zig-zags for about half a mile [about  $2\frac{1}{2}$  English miles] down a high steep hill. The view meanwhile is beyond description. At your feet flows the Lomnitz, along which the pretty little town lies for about half a mile; behind it rises the enormous mass of the Riesengebirge, Schneekoppe

crowning the whole with its little chapel. To the right stretches a long valley, where Warmbrunn, Hirschberg, the castle of Kynast and various other forts and castles are seen.

We arrived at about one o'clock. Reichenbach went to his brother-in-law, Prince Reusz, who owns the old castle of Steinhof. The Prince, whose acquaintance I had made here, came at once to beg me to stay with him, as I did till next morning, and it was like being in a fairy palace. Nothing can be compared to the sunrise and sunset in this paradise. I could hardly tear myself away the morning after, at about three, to ascend Schneekoppe. By ten o'clock I was on Austrian ground, where I refreshed myself with a draught of Hungarian wine. Then, quite alone—for Reichenbach dared not climb for fear of his chest—and even without a guide, till one o'clock I made my way with great difficulty but steadily up hill; however, though the climb was really very stiff, I was amply rewarded by the glorious view over an extent of above twenty miles [about 93 English miles] towards Prague and Breslau, from the topmost peak of this range, which is crowned with a



chapel to the Virgin. I could get no higher than this for hundreds of miles round ; I stood where no tree will grow, on the highest ground in all Germany, 4900 feet above your heads. Below me, snow was lying in the hollows ; two streams flow from the steep wall of rock in opposite directions. Lower down come the pine forests, looking like a field of cresses, and beyond lie the endless plains with numberless villages, pools, woods and bleaching-grounds. But it is impossible to give any idea of it. Then I turned to the northward and looked out towards where you dwell, and wrote a few words to you in my note-book. I then left, and after a tremendous walk, found myself back in Schmiedeberg by six o'clock. There I found a coach on the point of starting for Landeshut, so I got in and arrived at eight. From thence I returned the same evening to Salzbrunn, a distance of three miles, getting in at about midnight. The excursion did me great good, it did not cost me a thaler, and I shall never forget it. I have now been seven weeks in Salzbrunn, much longer than I at first intended. It has, however, cost me more than I had expected.

I am setting out for Poland with eight thalers, and five thalers more which I have borrowed. However much I may have to pinch in Berlin I can never regret having seen so much for such a relatively small outlay. And if I may only hope to keep as well and hearty as I now am, I have not paid too dear for it. So I am in the best spirits, and only wish that you all may be as flourishing as I am ; excepting only in the matter of money. My next letter will reach you from Berlin, where I must positively be by the 15th. If either of the brothers is at home, I shall beg him to give my father news of my journey and my stay here ; I will write to him as soon as I get to Berlin. But it is not worth while to send another letter from home, the postage is so enormously dear. The moss and violets I enclose, grow only on the very summit of Schneekoppe, where all other vegetation ceases to exist.

Now farewell, dear mother. Keep well and think of me often. I will let you hear at once of my return to Berlin. Best love to the dear sisters. Once more good-bye, and always love your

HELMUTH.

Frankfort, March 25th, 1828.

DEAR MOTHER,

Nothing but the fear lest our letters should cross, has kept me so long from writing, so it is all the pleasanter to be able to do so now and to tell you that my health is perfectly good, and that I hope in the course of the summer to have a few weeks' bathing at Swinemünde, and so prevent any relapse.

The news you send me of my father grieves me greatly, though it was not wholly unexpected. Six weeks ago I wrote to him, and tried to dissuade him from the notion of retiring from military life—the only sphere of occupation for him—and giving up his only hope when he was really so near being made Colonel of his Regiment. I offered him my salary of 60 to 80 thalers if he should be in need of ready money for the first outfit. But the idea had taken too deep root; he thought himself too unlucky in his military career to reflect that any other promised even less success, with less opportunity for work and smaller pay. However, it is done, and we must hope that he may not rue it; at any rate we will not let him see that we blame

him. The king will surely do something for him.

If only my father could rent and manage a farm. But the worst of it is that the mischief is not so much in his ill-luck as in himself. We must wait and see what comes of it.

I am heartily glad that I can give you the good news of myself that some weeks since, as a result of my personal application and of the reports sent in to the Court of Directors of the Military Students, the chief of the General Staff promised unconditionally that I should be appointed to the work of the General Staff in May or July ; and this, with the present restricted numbers of the General Staff, is wonderfully good luck, for it would not have come to me in turn for the next six or seven years. I shall then for nine months in the year draw from 20 to 25 thalers a month, and need no further help. Thus, in time, your position, too, will be improved, and till then the only thing, especially for me, is to be as wide awake as possible.

For the present, and apparently till I am appointed to the office, I shall retain my place in

the Staff-college of the division. As I have now taken up surveying and drawing, I have no lack of work ; I have fourteen lectures and eight inspections a week, as well as the surveillance of thirty-one youngsters, who, however, like me, and whom I keep in proper respect and good order. But I owe my promised appointment to the very favourable report from the Division.

During the last few months I have been compiling a compendium for my pupils on military map-making, which is now in the press. The remuneration will amount to at least a hundred thalers, which however I must to some extent anticipate, since I no longer give private teaching ; and I have also lost my mess allowance, for I am no longer attached to the battalion, which has been moved to Stettin.

My position here is very pleasant, and brings with it many advantages, among which I include the capital riding-lessons, for which I pay nothing, and which I have been having for the last five months. They are now at an end ; to-day we are to ride a grand quadrille in all the various paces.

I have lately made the acquaintance of Countess

Blumenthal and her family, who have been to Gutsnachbar in the Liebenthal, and say they recognized me by my family likeness. You tell me nothing about Adolf. I hope that he and Ludwig will decide on not trying to make a career in Denmark. I see here with envy so many young fellows of my own age, councillors (*Räthe*) and assessors, with incomes of from 600 to 1000 thalers a year. I shall never regret having given up the comforts of home and so having secured prospects of advancement, little as may have come of it hitherto.

How is your sweet little garden looking? You must by this time be very busy. How I should like to go there for a half an hour now and then, if only I had not to work there with you.

Here it is quite spring-like; the Oder already overflows its banks, and as soon as it has got rid of its sheet of ice, the boats will be skimming over the meadows with wide, shining sails, like large swans.

If I am not obliged to spend most of my profits in advance, I should enjoy nothing so much as to make an excursion through the mountains, to dear Silesia or Saxony; when once I am in the office

there will be an end of that, and this summer is, perhaps, the last of my freedom. I shall get a short leave of absence in winter, I daresay, and as money will soon be easier, it is to be hoped, I shall drop in on you for Christmas some day, when you least expect me.

Now adieu, dear mother; a thousand loves to all the dear ones. Take care of yourself, and think sometimes of your

HELMUTH.

MY DEAR LENA,

There is still room for a few words to you; how are you, that you never write to me? How have you got through the winter? I hope you are well. Keep that little limb, Vips, in good order, that's all. My health is wonderful. I often lie unconscious for eight or ten hours—at night; I have no appetite after meals; towards evening such convulsive yawning and stretching, and all day utter sleeplessness, and restlessness in all my body,—I only hope you do not suffer so. I draw diligently, and yesterday finished off a grand Turk's head; I will soon begin the landscape for you. As I write I get a letter from Berlin which is

charged 1 thaler 4 groschen for postage. There are surveying instruments with it for the school. I am glad to think that I shall soon have done with surveying.

Does old Schmidt still pull your hair? Remember me to all who ask for me, and write soon to your loving and faithful brother

HELMUTH.

You say nothing about my novelette "The Friends."<sup>5</sup> Oh! to think of the things which flowed from this immortal pen during my illness, and the publisher did me out of my honorarium!

Frankfort-on-the-Oder,

May 9th, 1828.

DEAR MOTHER,

Your dear letter, which I have just received, transported me in an instant from all my maps, reports, examination papers, and the other things with which I am inundated, to your cloister-like home. I see the coffee-machine sputtering on the table, the sisters stitching, Vips with a counting-

<sup>5</sup> This is the only known effort by the Field-Marshal in the domain of *belles-lettres*.



board, and quinine-powders, and you with a pair of fearfully ragged stockings—in your hand—shaking your head as you settle your spectacles to repair the leak in this Danaid's sieve. And I can hear my friend the cow lowing for some fresh grass; and there is something stamping and shouting overhead, probably one of my respected brothers, announcing his late *levée*. You are all so busy that you do not see that I, or my spirit—look round, Lena—am standing in your midst. As far as my body is concerned, it is sitting here, at this very writing-table strewn with an amazing chaos of maps, letters, instruments, plane-tables, calculations, and what not, and there lies a long money-bag of goodly proportions—but not a bag of money. The facts are these. I have been quite unexpectedly appointed, since the beginning of the year, to the Survey Office, and by June 1st I must be at Namslau, in Upper Silesia. As you may suppose, it was a delightful surprise to me. But now such a mass of business crowds on me all at once, that I hardly know how I am ever to get through it.

May 26th.—As I am off to Silesia the day after

to-morrow, I hasten to finish this letter, which, in consequence of an unexpected duty, has been set aside for a fortnight. I was sent off with my Division-students to survey four-and-a-half square miles [about  $21\frac{1}{2}$  English square miles] of ground on the right bank of the Oder, for the Lieutenant-General. We were in the field every day for ten or eleven hours. In the evening we all assembled outside my quarters, which were commonly very good, since I might take them wherever I would in any village. There we would sing; we had taken a guitar; we ate and drank whatever was to be had, and last evening, in the most lovely moonlight, we crossed the Oder and came home. As soon as I am at the quarters of my survey I will write again. I am very unwilling to leave my Division-students, and they too are not best pleased at the change. Now adieu, dear mother, I only wish you may all be as well and happy as I am. Best love to the dear sisters; keep me in your affectionate remembrance.

HELMUTH.

Grüttenberg near Oels, July 6th, 1828.

DEAR MOTHER,

It is long since you have heard from me, and let that always be a sign to you that all is well with me. I wish I could be sure of the same with regard to you, for the thought of home is to me always mingled with fears and regrets.

Of myself I have nothing to tell but what is pleasant. In the last four or five weeks I have been living here on the estate of one Herr von Kleist, who makes me as much at home as a child of his own, so that I have surveyed almost half of my section from this as head-quarters. At half-past four in the morning a coffee pot is brought in to me, with two plates on which slices of bread and butter and cakes are piled up to a considerable height, irresistibly suggesting the hospitalities of a Highland chieftain. Then I sally forth attired in unbleached gaiters, a grey dust cloak, white foraging cap, and gloves without finger-tips, armed with an instrument case and a good Ramsden telescope. Behind me my servant with the plane-table. So I go across fields and gardens, relying on my general pass, which I always carry in my pocket and

which affords extraordinary facilities ; for instance, one of my colleagues had all the bells removed from a tower because they were in his way. Every mayor is enjoined to provide us with horses, quarters, and two men every day. As soon as I get in we sit down to dinner, when my only anxiety is how to manage to eat some of each dish, there are so many. At supper again from three to four dishes are served, and between whiles there is breakfast, luncheon, afternoon coffee, and what not, and good Hungary wine in plenty ; added to which I am perfectly well, and so, perfectly content.

As I now really get four times as much as Fritz and Wilhelm, I deduct from it 5 thalers every month ; this, during the nine months for which I draw this pay—and for three years—makes 45 thalers, which I place at your service.

My finances are, of course, in a flourishing condition. All the profits are gone, to be sure, in paying my debts, for I never had so little money as last year, and I have had to procure a complete civilian outfit, that being necessary in my present employment ; but now, with the very good pay

of 45 thalers, I have very few expenses. In Berlin indeed I shall not be so well off. I am taking advantage of a favourable opportunity, to start to-morrow for three weeks in the mountains, which, at a distance of twenty miles, show their blue peaks quite on the horizon. I shall go first to Schweidnitz to visit Wartensleben, who is now married; and from thence to Salzbrunn, where I shall take the waters. I am rejoicing at the thought of seeing incomparable Fürstenstein again, only the day after to-morrow.

If only I could give you a peep from the Riesengrab and through the deep, dark Feldschlucht to the old and new castles!

Your next letter, which I look for with impatience, I will beg you to send during the next fortnight to Schweidnitz, and after that to Oels, where I will send for it. After my return I shall be staying at Ludwigsdorf near Oels, with his Excellency General von P. The parting here to-day will be quite a sad one; the children have got quite used to their lodger. I have been obliged to promise that I will return for the harvest-home.

Adieu, dear mother, keep well and strong, and write soon to your loving son

HELMUTH.

Again much love to the sisters. Augusta's slippers are still extant, and the barège scarf, like Lena's dress, still excites much admiration and envy.

Schön-Bricse, August 18th, 1828.

DEAR MOTHER,

I found your letter of July 20th on coming in, and had the comfort of learning that you are well and sound. Tell Adolf, who no doubt was known to Walter Scott when he invented the character of Alan Fairford in "Red Gauntlet," that I wish him all success, and some impudence in his examination. It is really a melancholy thing that, with you, even the most solid learning must be subject to the chances of a single throw, and that even if the dice fall right, it is hardly regarded as a well-founded claim to a brilliant career. Loui must look forward to this break-neck examination with two-fold agitation. I really believe he would rather set a whole law book to

music than learn it by heart, and if it came to fetching the blind goddess out of hell—as Proserpina<sup>6</sup> was once fetched by another musician—he would do it without looking round at her once. Give my best love to the dear, good little sisters. We really must dance a galop together again some day, and they must overhaul my cuffs and neckerchiefs. I hope that Lena keeps Victor in as good order as of yore, when he only occasionally gave vent to his feelings by a few thumps and a mild curse if his cap was not brushed or his frill not soft enough.

The failure of the fruit crops, and the storms and rain, you suffer in common with us, far and wide throughout the country; still, the summer has been fine, and the corn harvest here extremely abundant. I had to limit my journey to a fortnight, so could stay only six days at Salzbrunn; however, I drank ninety glasses of the water. I was unfortunately obliged to make my tour in the mountains alone. So I hurried through it; in fact, I made the long excursion from Schmiedeberg, over the whole range to Schreiberhau, in one day, and did not ascend Schneekoppe, knowing it

<sup>6</sup> Eurydice?

already. In one of the high villages I provided myself with a guide, and climbed literally up into the clouds which soon enwrapped us closely. We got up the Sciffenlehne by one of the most fatiguing paths, a staircase of great boulders, which took us up to 4000 feet above your heads. Here we walked among tall pine-trees above a rushing streamlet, and then over a green and always wet meadow, on which the herds were wandering with their bells. At the top it began to rain smartly. But the view, when the wind blew the masses of cloud among the dark pine-forests, and swept through the deep ravines, is indescribable. Now a wide valley—houses, hamlets, and towns, with the open country for miles beyond and villages innumerable; then suddenly everything hidden again in grey clouds, wreathing the peaks with a majestic roar. I saw the same spectacle again on the Schnee gruben, and I prefer it infinitely to a quite clear sky. You can hardly believe your eyes when the vast curtain of cloud parts on the wings of the storm, worthy of the stage of perhaps ten thousand square miles on which you look down. The longer you gaze the more you discern—a



streak, a speck; and the speck is a town, a hill, or a wood, over which the clouds are driving, far beneath your feet. Especially lovely are the great bleaching grounds which stretch in regular, snow-white fields between the blue mirrors of tiny lakes among the black woods. The roads meander like fine wandering threads over the hills, which, though it made you pant to climb them, from hence look quite flat. Along them for a mile or so stretch the villages and towns with their clean white walls and shining, silver-grey shingle roofs. Immediately at my feet was a precipice of perhaps nine hundred feet of perpendicular cliff.

In the evening I descended with some difficulty into the ominous-looking valley through which the Elbe tumbles in little cascades over numberless ridges and boulders, presenting a grand spectacle as a whole. My favourite spot too, the falls of the Zacken, I saw in the twilight from the Teufelsthal, and I spent the night in a glass house by the foaming Zacken. On the following morning I visited the Kocher Fall and the castle of Kynast, of which you know the romantic legend. Certainly only a very cruel heart could require a

man to ride out of the high window and round the top of the wall, where it would be impossible to turn, or even to come down. The precipice beneath the walls is deeper at every step, the points of the highest peaks are dizzy before the horseman's eyes, and close to the entrance to the castle a gulf yawns which, like a serpent, seems to draw the unhappy wretch to his destruction from sheer horror. What a terrific fall must it have been of the armed Knight and horse from that peak of rock. The sight of the ruins of these great fortresses, such as Bolkenburg, Schweinhaus, Nimmersatt and others, makes a peculiarly melancholy impression. I visited these on my way, and Adolf and Ludwig will have seen others yet finer. A certain unsatisfied curiosity enhances the feeling; the neighbours and inhabitants of such places know nothing about them but that they have furnished the stones for building their hovels. (As the commandant of Pilsen asserts that the murder of Wallenstein, if it ever took place at all, must have happened long before his time.) And still the half-effaced trace of a saint's effigy on a wall, or the ruts in the rocky

soil rouse a whole flood of hypotheses and reflections.

However, it is time to return from these ruined strongholds to the beautiful castle where I am at present staying. You go through a finely-painted domed hall, where the walls are prettily decorated with stucco, excepting where they are covered with coats of arms, cherubs, festoons and the like. It leads into a suite of rooms which constitute my lodgings. These lofty rooms are fitted with large mirrors, damask sofas, panelled walls, elaborately inlaid floors, and marble chimney shelves; the walls are covered with a collection of choice pictures, the work of such painters as Titian, Rubens, Van Dyck, Wouvermans and other masters. Here, after my work is done, I loiter round undisturbed, a catalogue in my hand, in delicious *far niente*, sometimes gazing, sometimes copying, sometimes wondering how I have become possessed of so much splendour. For he who enjoys possesses; and can the owner do more, or be secure of possessing them longer than I? Though I wish he may, and indeed have no reason to doubt it. Before my eyes spreads the park,

enclosed within walls and graced with stone statues and urns filled with a luxuriant growth of pink and blue hydrangeas, which I might call an aristocratic flower—as Scott calls the peacock an aristocratic bird—and with trailing creepers looking as if they had overflowed from them. Fountains, terraces, arbours, and all the devices of a Lenôtre are to be seen within these walls, but the whole is very fit to be the hereditary estate of the Imperial Counts of Kospoth and gives an idea of wealth and power. And it is not unpleasant to transfer the finest oranges from the tree to one's own mouth. My host and his handsome wife, the very ideal of a lady of rank, are as good and kind to me as strict etiquette allows them to be. The young ladies at first treated me with icy coldness; but we know each other better now; and though I have been here no more than a week, in that time I have learnt, however tired I may come in, always to appear in full dress at dinner. An elegant black evening suit, which my profession has shed, has therefore come in very usefully. How long I shall remain I cannot say, for here,

where it has long since ceased to be customary to say all you think, only tact can tell me how long I shall be welcome. But I beg you still to address your letters to Oels, where I will have them called for. Adieu, dear mother—space—and postage! Yours,

HELMUTH.

Berlin, November 15th, 1828.

DEAR MOTHER,

I have delayed replying to your dear letter of the 24th ult. because I wanted to tell you something of my new position, and since I arrived here the bustle of business, settling and dissipation, have till now prevented my telling you that I reached Berlin safe and sound on November 1st, and have established myself here for the next four months. It was with the greatest interest that I read, at a distance, all that was going on within your quiet—or rather, at that time, noisy cloister-walls. My stay at Briese was prolonged to ten weeks, and I might have stayed on for two years if it had not occurred to me that I must give in my drawings. Torn

young from my parental home and your loving care, you know how early I was forced to find myself a stranger wherever I went, and to earn from others the affection, friendship and esteem which comes to most men from the ties of relationship or friendly intercourse. Never, unless I except the good Stemanns, have I been so kindly received, nowhere have I been so content and so thoroughly at home as at the Kospoths. It is a fine thing for a poor devil like me, perpetually beset by want of money, superior officers, the service, obedience to orders, and all the other evils which flew out of Pandora's box, to find himself in a berth where all the minor annoyances of life, which, in combination, may make it wretched, have ceased to exist ; where everything is beautiful, pleasing, rich and noble ; where pleasure may be the end of effort because work is in itself a pleasure ; where art is not the stinted spice of life, but is life itself, and where, by pleasing himself he pleases others. Briesc was a warm gleam of sunshine in a dark autumn day. Really I could have fancied myself at the Court of Ferrara ; and if I were not absolutely lacking in everything

Tasso-like, I could have believed myself the much-honoured poet.

When I am perfectly happy—and I think at once of the ass—I write verses, but only then. So posterity has every reason to wish me happy! If you could see that beautiful castle with the splendid picture-gallery, the great orangery—the largest in Silesia—the truth of my comparison would strike you.

(Here follows a parody on Mignon's song in Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister*<sup>7</sup> adapted to the circumstances of Von Moltke's visit to Briesce.)

<sup>7</sup> Kennst du die Flur, wo die Citronen blü'h'n,  
Im dunkeln Laub die Goldorangen glü'h'n,  
Ein sanfter Wind durch hohe Pappeln weht,  
In langen Reih'n die gold'ne Rebe steht?  
Dahin, dahin—lenkt die Erinnerung gern den Sinn.  
Kennst du das Schloß, es leuchtet fern sein Dach,  
Hell glänzt der Saal, es schimmert das Gemach,  
Die Bilder seh'n von allen Wänden drein,  
Als fragten sie: ist hier nicht herrlich sein?  
Dahin, dahin so gerne die Gedanken zieh'n.  
Woht kenne ich das Schloß mit hohem Dach,  
Den schönen Park, das schimmernde Gemach.

Was nun der 'Drachen alte Brut' anbelangt, so änderte ich das ab in:

Und der Bewohner Lebenswürdigkeit,  
Die Allem erst den rechten Werth verleiht,  
Es waltet drin—für Schönes und für Gutes edler Sinn.

How greatly I now miss the friendly intercourse of such cultivated people. Now, when I get home at about two o'clock—for I work till then, from eight in the morning, at the General Staff Office—I find, to begin with, a considerable difference between my dinners here and there. The cook at Briese has evidently thoroughly studied his branch of chemistry, and uses superior matter. The capital Hungarian wine, too, is lacking. However, I shall get used to all that. But when six o'clock strikes I always feel as though I ought to cast all my books and papers to the winds, and go down into the red damask drawing-room to stretch myself comfortably in the delicious armchair into which I fitted like the yolk in an egg, like a snail in its shell. That incomparable piece of furniture was so much my own that even the Countess herself would have given it up, I am sure, as soon as I appeared. Then, while the young Count divagated on the piano, in fugues, chorales and contrapuntal variations, I patiently awaited the advent of the ladies with their embroidery, and the old count with a book out of which he read aloud, while I drew, or sometimes set stitches in a



row at the embroidery frame, which the young countess no less industriously picked out again.— But I wait in vain ; not even old Cadeau comes in, a good beast who had lost all his senses from sheer old age—excepting smell ; for he did smell sometimes very perceptibly. The Kospoths interest themselves in everything that is fashionable and *distingué* in Silesia, so we often went out on little excursions, or hunting. The time slipped by most agreeably and improvingly, and our parting was sad and not without tears. I had hardly arrived here when I found a case of pineapples, without any name, but enclosing a file which I had left at Bricse.

My stay there has also been highly advantageous to my finances, or rather to my creditors. During this last lean year, when I depended solely on my pay, they have been so sympathethic that I can only be grateful to them ; the greater part of my debts are paid, and I hope to be quite free in the course of next year. With this view I gave up returning by Dresden. I have had the opportunity of copying many pretty pictures, but have left most of them behind. I brought with me a

Holy Family by Rubens ; it is the largest thing I have yet done, and includes four heads of life-size, of the greatest beauty—not counting the head of the Dove. I was delighted when the Countess herself pronounced that I had quite caught the resemblance ; they framed it and hung it.

I have not much to tell of my life here. I am like a man lying on an uncomfortable sofa, who changes his attitude every moment. I have hitherto been constantly to the play, oftener than I ought in the future ; but it is a great temptation to me. I also go often to the picture exhibition in the Academy gallery. All the best painters send their works there from the remotest ends of the kingdom, that they may be seen, criticized and sold. Besides the many fine painted pictures, you there see a crowd of living ones ; and if you have any acquaintance you are sure to meet them.

I heard with joy from my father that Adolf has got through his examination, and well. I fancy the added words, “with distinction” mean something very good ; is he himself satisfied ?

Write to me, dear mother, what prospects now lie before him; and when he gets home give him my hearty congratulations. Best love to all the others who may be with you. I hope to hear before long how they are going on. To-day I can only write to Ludwig to answer his letter. He is, so far, the one who knows most of my surroundings here, so we have more interests in common on which to enlarge than I have with either of the others. My father writes that he may perhaps pay a visit to Berlin this winter, and I have advised him to do so; it will be a change for him.

We have had a fearful September and October, with much rain, which hinders my work; the poor troops are almost drowned in camp.

Farewell, dear mother, let me hear what are Fritz's prospects of promotion; he is the most luckless of us all. Take care of yourself, dear mother, and always love your most affectionate

HELMUTH.

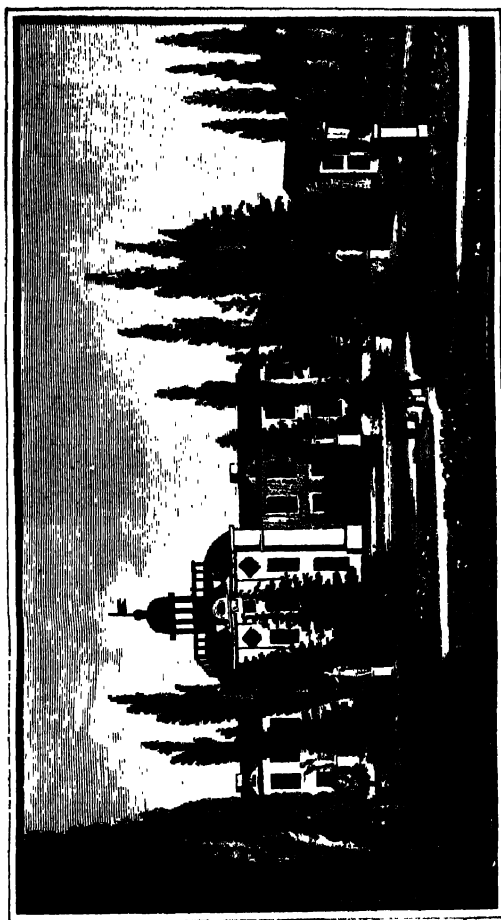
Berlin, December 25th, 1828.

Address: Grosse Friedrichstrasse, No. 66, c.

DEAR MOTHER,

That I am still in the land of the living you will be fully assured by the accompanying document, in which will you be good enough to fill in the blank spaces? Besides this I feel bound to tell you that I am perfectly well and very happy. I account for this in the first place by the fact that I am very busy, so that sometimes, when I go out at eight in the morning I put the door key in my pocket. Work at the office goes on till two, drawing, reducing plans or taking problems from the Staff officers of the General Staff, as well as reading the newspapers and going out for breakfast. The hours are rather long, no doubt, but not without interest. We relate our experience while on survey, discuss the newspapers, criticize the theatre or plan battles against one another. As there are some very clever heads among my new associates, and all have had the sort of education which alone makes social intercourse a pleasure, the talk is as various as it is lively. Nor are we in the smallest degree on

ceremony from the highest downwards. Those who have no relations in the city have organized a sort of mess where we dine well and cheaply. We are always very jolly over this meal ; we often sit over a glass of wine afterwards till nearly four o'clock. Then come our private studies. I am attending, gratis, a course on French literature, one of Modern History at the office, and one on Goethe at the University. Almost a third of the class is military, and at an English course we number more than the students. My other lessons, besides these, cost me thirteen thalers, sixteen silver groschen a month ; namely Russian, riding, and dancing. This last is only for the sake of the Mazurka, which I must know in case I go to Poland next summer. The riding, to my great delight, is in a very large new riding-school lighted with gas. The teaching is excellent, and irrespective of the capital exercise, I fancy I am making good progress. In time I shall no doubt have a mount, and then this constant practice will stand me in good stead. Russian I consider of the first importance. Russia is to Prussia of the first consequence, and very few are familiar with its



THE CASTLE OF SCHÖN-BRIESE FROM THE PARK.



language ; I work at it with great zeal. In the good conduct lists for officers there is a special heading for the languages they know : this will be my fifth. Thus we come to six or seven o'clock, and if I am going to the theatre the day is at an end. This mode of life is of course only possible under the favourable conditions which I now enjoy, and which, besides the year's expenses, have placed me in a position to pay away more than 150 thalers in bills which had accumulated during hard times.

That my thoughts yesterday, on Christmas Eve, were with you in the yellow room<sup>s</sup> in the convent you may easily imagine. I ended dinner cheerfully over a bowl with my comrades, and spent the evening with the Ballhorns. I was delightfully surprised when the postman this morning brought me an anonymous letter and a box with the Oels post-mark. On opening it, I first took a large taper out of the cotton wool, then a beautiful pocket-book. When I opened it, I found first a charming little picture of the room where we used to sit together at Briese, with everything just as I

<sup>s</sup> At Preetz, where his mother was then living.

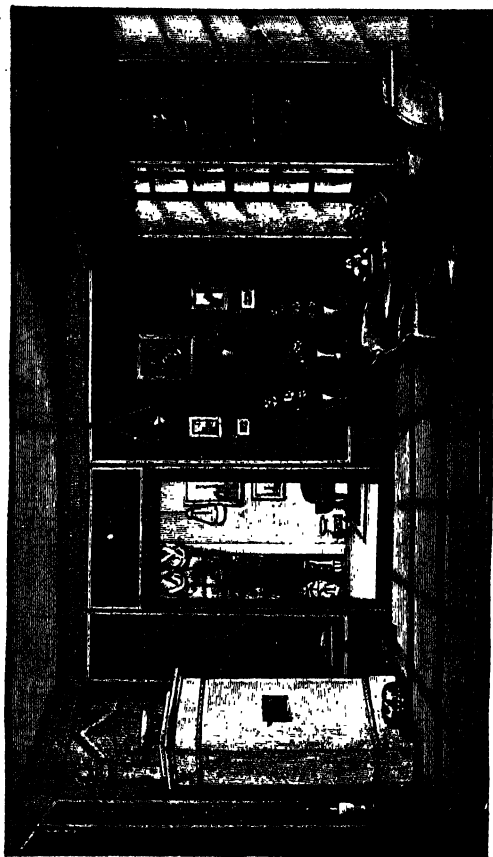


left it. My chair is by the table, old Cadeau snoring in his basket by the stove, the oranges and wine are on the table, the pictures, the vine outside the window, all exactly shown. In short, as I look at it by candle-light, I could fancy myself there. Even prettier if possible is a second picture ; a view of the house from the park, from a point which I had once noted as advantageous. Above his work the Count has written :—

In a soft light, familiar spot,  
Your image smiles a greeting to my heart and eyes ;  
And though treacherous speech is silent,  
Still my spirit may enjoy the pleasures of memory.  
The flowery glories of the broad gardens  
The sweet fragrance of your shady groves  
Fancy brings before me in the gloomy winter's night,  
As though under the radiance of a spring morning.

The rest of the space was filled with pomade, soap, Eau de Cologne, and a case worked on cardboard by the young countess, pencils, a mother-of-pearl knife with six blades, etc., etc. And a pretty new year's card was also laid in the pocket-book.

This letter has again been laid aside for a few days, and I fear you will be impatient, dear little mother, for the certificate. May all be as well with



THE DRAWING-ROOM AT SCHÖN-BEISE.



you, and the dear sisters as I most heartily wish. Adolf's examination gave me great satisfaction ; you soon will have one care less. I quite approve of your not having moved from your house. It is very pleasant in summer, and you will not easily find such a pretty garden elsewhere. Only think, for a single room—in a dear neighbourhood to be sure, near the office—without attendance, I pay eight thalers a month ; and my comrades all pay more. With wood and lights it mounts up to from 100 to 120 thalers a year. Much love to the dear brothers and sisters. Now adieu, dear mother. Do not forget your

HELMUTH.

Rusko, near Jarozsyn,

September 14th, 1829.

DEAR MOTHER,

First I must crave forgiveness for my long silence. The quantity of business, as well as the many diversions which my stay here brings with it, have been the cause ; and now, when I will try to make up for my delay, I can scarcely believe that so much time can have slipped by since I received your letter of July.

I heartily hope that these lines will find you and the others well and happy, all the more because here, in the country, the extraordinarily cold, wet summer has caused an almost epidemic fever.

As far as I am concerned I am in all respects as flourishing as I could wish. In point of money I save enough to dare to hope that by the end of the year, when my present work is done, I may find myself out of debt. This is in itself a great thing, and then Heaven may help me further. With regard to personal comfort, as the most wonderful good fortune would have it, out of thirty-two lots I drew the very one which brought me here to Rusko to the O. family, with whom I made acquaintance at Salzbrunn, and whom I visited here four years since—exactly four years to-morrow—and who have always had such a particular fancy for me that they treat me like a child of their own. This is the third house in which I have been so fortunate as to find such a kind reception; and if it were possible for any place to be the same as home, I might find it here, as before at the Kospoths and the Stemanns.

I was at the Kospoths this summer on August

19th for the Count's birthday. I could only stay a few days, and made a journey of thirty miles [about 140 English miles], but they appreciated it highly. If I were not in such good quarters here, I would go there to draw out my survey and spend the autumn.

Ever since leaving beautiful Herkow, where I was so hospitably received by the old Starostin, I have been here at Rusko, where I shall remain till the end of October.

If only the old palace there, of the Sapiehas and Piastes, looking out over the endless expanse of black forests, could open its great vaulted halls, and the rows of portraits of the lords and palatines of Poland look down in amazement on the stranger who had dared to penetrate into those plains where once they ruled, and where now, by some incredible subversion of things, the sovereign is an Elector of Brandenburg, whose Emperor their horsemen had once to release in his own capital—where now neither their name, nor their faith, speech, laws, or manners, survive! While there, where nothing remains of their power but a reflection, or of their greatness but a memory, the eye lingers on

a vast heap of ruins—here, to descend to the prose of the present, my residence is a humble dwelling with a shingle roof, surrounded by farm buildings, cottages and gardens, and enclosed by an oak wood, which has made way for it. But it might be said of this, as of the Greek houses in Constantinople, that they are only built of boards but conceal within them Asiatic luxury. Here we have pictures, good and bad, antiques and precious chandeliers, crammed into small rooms. Marble tables which once graced vast halls are wedged against narrow windows, and large mirrors hang on ill-painted walls. Amid such things as these lives my host, who, in the Polish revolution, played his part under Kosciusko, and who combines a rooted hatred for the new régime with the greatest kindness to me, its servant. He is far too sensible to be of those who abuse the Government when a wheel comes off, or think it is the King's fault when we get too much rain. But as all intercourse with the Government officials is a grievance to him, and the bad times, high taxes, and new-fangled ways, make him angry, it is his wife who manages all the complicated affairs of an estate of at least half a million of

Polish gulden, which she does with infinite energy, ability and shrewdness. A daughter of about nine, and a niece who is very rich, but unfortunately very ugly, complete the family party with which I have become completely amalgamated, though so heterogeneous an item. In fact, I could not more exactly describe the peculiarities of these good people than by saying that they—or rather their way of living and being, are almost exactly the opposite of mine. In judging of them we must adopt a peculiar, I might say a national standard, otherwise we shall always judge them falsely; and while we regard them as feather-brained and boastful, they can but look upon us as excessively pedantic and even somewhat hypocritical. In forming an estimate of the young ladies especially, it behoves a man to be on his guard. Betrayed by their friendliness, and an absence of formality which surprises a foreigner, a simpleton might be led to believe that he had but to pursue and conquer, but he would find it more difficult than with us, where greater depth of feeling easily comes into conflict with strictness of manners.



Just as I am about to write you some account of my mode of life here, I perceive that my rambling pen has already filled the paper. So you must read the crossed writing, and at the cost of your eyes learn that I have almost done my work, and am enjoying a pleasant time of idleness. I am drawing out my maps, and a few likenesses now and then, and making plans for buildings which my servant, who is a practised bricklayer, carries out, while my hostess supplies the materials. I am particularly pleased to be able to do this, and it is a great convenience to my good friends here, as craftsmen and artists are very difficult to get and very dear. The façade of a cellar in the garden looks very fine already, built of broken boulders, on a most elegant design, and soon a bath-house is to be erected of the same material, by the large fishpond, from a drawing I am just finishing.

Hunting, fishing—very good—and various calls on and from the neighbours, fill up the time. I have acquired quite a taste here for country management, and I only need an estate to farm it with pleasure.

But all these little employments which occupy my time very pleasantly, look very unimportant on paper—and are also becoming very illegible. Perhaps in the course of the winter I may be able to exchange written for verbal communication. So I conclude, begging you to give my best love to the brothers and sisters, and to remember me with affection. Yours,

HELMUTH.

Berlin, November 6th, 1829.

I hasten, dear mother, to let you know that I arrived here safe and sound by mail, on Sunday, the 1st of the month. My kind hosts, the O.'s, sent me the first ten miles [about 40 English miles], as far as Posen with their own horses, and supplied me with wine, tea, coffee, roast fowls, hares, ducks, a game pasty, and what not, as though I were starting for the North Pole.

I spent three whole months at Rusko, and went into Silesia once, to the wool fair at Breslau; and if O. had not been able to sell so quickly, I should have flown off for three days into the mountains, which lay before me in a long blue chain. After

I had finished my work at Rusko, in spite of the incessantly bad weather, I spent the time in trapping field-fares, threshing, shooting excursions, shaking down the fruit-crop, and such rustic occupations; on wet days we played whist, at which I had to pay a learner's fee, and on fine days I drew every member of the family, down to the *struz* or watchman, in his fur coat and red cap, and the housemaid in her very pretty national costume. And every two or three days we were out paying a visit, going to absolution, or to mass.

So now I feel quite lonely in the midst of the turmoil of the city, for 200,000 persons cannot make up for two in whom one feels an interest. Happily, my kind hosts will be here in the winter on business, and I shall be glad to see them here. However, to tell the truth, I find the stir and bustle of a town, like my present home, a pleasant change. The theatre especially is a joy to me. And very agreeable it is to meet all my fellow-officers from the various fixed quarters, from the Baltic to Prosna, each one relating his history and adventures in a sort of "Dichtung und Wahrheit,"

on which the others make their comments with such wit and humour as they have at their command. I am almost the only man who has had even decent quarters.

I have now gone back to my old lodgings at the corner of Grosse Friedrichstrasse and Mohrenstrasse, where I pay, indeed, nine thalers for a single room, but live very comfortably.

Yesterday I again paid 50 good thalers off my tailor's account, and I still have 40 thalers, my savings during the summer. Here, saving is out of the question. I wish very much, dear mother, that I may be able to go to you for the New Year, to see you and the other dear ones once more. But it could only be for a fortnight at any rate, for I cannot get leave. Much, very much love to the little sisters, and the boys who are with you. I hope, dear mother, that you are as well and happy as I am. For to-day I must close, begging you not to forget your

HELMUTH.

A sorrowful Postscript.—My shirts are in a very melancholy state, and new ones would be

highly desirable. But I only wish for three, for in my wandering mode of life more would only be in the way, and be more easily lost. They need be no finer than the last, and I should like the wristbands to be narrower.

Berlin, January 10th, 1830.

DEAR MOTHER,

Now that I have got into my old life again, I take advantage of the first Sunday morning to announce my arrival here, and send you my hearty thanks for your kind reception, and for your gift which enabled me to make the return journey so quickly and comfortably. When I had done my business in Hamburg, my stay there—alone as I was, and more inclined to look back on my stay with you than forward to the inevitable journey—was so irksome to me, that I was glad when at nine in the evening I found myself in my corner of the coach, between two gentlemen who were as taciturn as I. It was not at all cold, and indeed I had my whole wardrobe on my person. There was a thick fog outside, so nothing kept me from pursuing my own thoughts till we drove into the

gates of Berlin. Then I began to feel a little uneasy about my self-granted leave. At Ludwigs-hut, as luck would have it, I came across the hereditary Grand-Duke, and in the mail office I met the Commandant von Küstrin; I was forced to speak to both, but up till now all is well.

I made inquiry on my way for my purse, but it must have fallen out of my pocket, not on earth but into the air and on to another planet, for on this, at any rate, no one has seen it. Here I am sitting once more in my snug little blue room at my writing table, my coffee machine at my elbow, in which, in spite of all the theories I acquired from you, I can never achieve that perfection of concoction which made yours so delicious. Look as I may at the pictures of Lena and Gusta, there is no one here to butter me a roll, and I invariably drop the lower half, which falls, buttered-side down, on the table. But I shall get used to all this. All the morning I am busy; the dinner is a pleasant hour, which I spend in very cheerful company, but the evenings hang fire dreadfully. I miss the comfort and joy of sitting on your sofa, while Lena tells me a story or

Augusta makes music, or I chat with you. Neither society nor the theatre can make up for this, and I would give them up gladly if I might only slip over to the yellow drawing-room for a few hours every evening. In fancy I often do so ; but then I feel so miserably lonely in my blue one, that I snatch up my sword and cap and rush off to the nearest café, where, after all, I am as lonely as ever, though the place may be crowded with men. If only I had Loui here ! for he is like a well-tuned glass harmonica ; whichever note you strike it gives out a full chord. But I comfort myself with the worst of all comforts : that it cannot be. With faithful love, your

HELMUTH.

Wierzaka, near Posen, June 18th, 1830.

DEAR MOTHER,

In spite of fatigue, work, and change of place, my conscience at last gets the better of my idleness, and reproaches me for not having written to you for so long, and as you do not know where I am, I have even cut myself off from any news of you. But I should be only too glad to hear from you

once more, and know how you are. You can easily imagine all the questions which I could ask on the subject, so there is nothing for me to do but to come back at once to myself, and tell you how I have been during the last two months. I would give one of the sequestrated states if everything I want to tell you, and yet more to ask you, were already put on paper. But as that is impossible I will try to remember what, during these ten weeks, has seemed to me of any importance, or new or interesting, in the hope that the picture which I shall thus send you from a distance, may interest you for my sake, even though the things it shows you are not important or new or interesting to you.

In May I was sent out to drill the Landwehr recruits for the 8th Landwehr-battalion, at Frankfort. Here elegant youths with umbrellas, and straw hats, and canes, were put into blue jackets, and so licked into shape that they look now like soldiers, and indeed were hardly to be distinguished from them at the review. The severity of this paroxysm of drilling is so great that the warrior on his release lies huddled up on



his stove-bench in the curliest attitude possible for three days and nights on end, to ease his limbs back into their old joints and hinges after the stretching rack they have endured. As for myself, for those four weeks, I did not know that life contained anything but dressing, drill, rations, cleaning arms, drill again, inspection and shouting the word of command. At last, on June 10th, I came home with a consciousness of duty fulfilled and a commendation, and at once set out for Posen. Tired out as I was, I spent two nights, which I could have wished better employed, in travelling across the sands which Mother Nature has strewn so lavishly over "*les terres vastes et sablonneuses du marquis de Brandebourg*," as Voltaire described our country in his rage. When I entered the towered city of Posen, which is full of convents, it was Corpus-Christi day, and hundreds of people, especially country-folks in the old national costume, were following the monstrance borne by the Archbishop in person. Not a Jew would have dared to show himself, though the town swarms with them. As soon as the sacred object came in sight every one fell on his knees and the soldiers presented arms.

There is always something very imposing to me in the Catholic ritual ; all the more so because it is in such strong contrast to the indifference which is so often seen among us in matters of religion. I found a visit to the vast and once powerful convent of Owinsk, near Posen, most interesting. I there saw Cistercians, Bernardines and Sisters of Mercy, who, when the various orders were secularized, were formed into a mixed battalion and shut up here. The rule is extremely severe ; twice during the night, even in winter, the poor nuns must turn out to sing for an hour and a half in the choir. Their appearance in the various habits of their orders is very solemn ; especially the Cistercians in brown hair-cloth scapularies. It was a strange feeling to me to cross that threshold, over which these poor creatures may never pass out. For them that road leads only to the grave—for us into the world again. We saw the chapel, the parlour with its iron grating, and, to the consternation of the Sisters, we lost our way—three officers—in the cells, affecting ignorance. The good ladies are absolutely uneducated. They do not understand the Latin prayers they chant ; but

they say that God understands all languages, and so knows what they mean.

From Posen I came on at once to my work, and have put up here with Herr von Treskow at Wierzaka. I have a very friendly host, a good room, an excellent table, a capital glass of wine, a great deal to do, and am perfectly well.

Posen, June 22nd, 1830.

Before sending this off, I will announce my arrival here, where I must work out my second (and last—here sigh !) section.

My kind host has set out to-day for Carlsbad, and I was very, very near going with him. It was an excellent opportunity, and it cost me much self-denial not to accept his suggestion ; but I must repay a sum of eighty thalers which I borrowed last winter, and which I must now scrape together and save. So I gave up the pleasant journey.

Freiberg on the Mulde, July 20th, 1830.

I have already been wandering about for three weeks, dear mother, but though I have very often

thought of you, I have never found leisure for writing to you.

To-day nothing shall hinder me from sending you my best wishes and some news of myself. You will have had my enclosure in a letter to my father, sent off on the 30th of last month, and will have learnt from that, that this year's service led me hither through Dresden and the Erzgebirge. So far—*absit omen*—the journey has been most successful, the weather lovely for three weeks on end. I have not once had to unroll my cloak. In the morning, on the stroke of five, I set out on my spirited steed, the servant following on the black horse with a small valise, my cloak, and two bags with maps and dressing gear. We go on for 3—4—5 miles [about 14 to 23 English miles]. If the ride is an extra long one, I halt on the way for five or six hours, and do not proceed till evening, always map in hand. My good beasts eat exactly two full rations each, so, as fodder is very dear, I am almost in the plight of Diomedes, who was eaten by his horses. The day before yesterday I made a very long round. I rode in the morning from Annaberg to Oberwiesenthal, three miles [about 14

English miles]. To spare the horses I left them there, and went on foot by the new road over the Keilberg, the highest point of the Erzebirge, where I had work to do, and far down the slope on the other side, into Bohemia. By the time I got back I had walked at least three miles [about 14 English miles] in the hill country, and then rode the three miles back to Annaberg. I got in at seven in the evening, and as I had eaten nothing since five in the morning, you may believe how good the trout tasted. I went through most beautiful country. After visiting some friends in Dresden I rode to Teplitz by a little known but direct road, saw the battlefield of Kuhn, and then proceeded on my way along the lovely Eger valley to Carlsbad. Here I was so lucky as to meet our cousin Moltke, the Russian minister at Carlsruhe. He was to leave two days later, so I spent them with him, and on the 17th he and his wife took me on in a handsome carriage with four horses; our roads lay together for an hour, and I accompanied these friendly connections till my way took me up into the mountains. That evening I was at Schneeberg, at the northern foot of the hills.

To-morrow morning I am going by Tharandt and the valley of Plauen to Dresden, where my major is waiting for me to visit the battlefields of Kulm, of which I am to do the honours, particularly as to the details of the engagement and the spots where they took place. To this end I have been obliged thoroughly to study this complicated action and the preliminary movements. I must therefore go across the range again, but shall take another route so as to master it thoroughly.

From Dresden we go to the rendezvous at Bitterfeld, near Halle, where the whole of the General Staff are to meet on August 3rd, and then the real work begins. I enclose you a little flower which I plucked for you on a high cliff of the Erzebirge, and carried for some time in my hat.

How often I have thought of you while gazing at some fine view ; you always so greatly enjoy beautiful scenery. If only you could have seen the lovely valley of Wolkenstein yesterday. The sun set gloriously, and the moon had already risen and was reflected in the roaring torrent ; the old castle stood opposite on a high crag. It was so beautiful

that I stayed the night there, and scrambled up the height again early this morning. Good-bye for to-day, dear mother, I shall be my own courier as far as Dresden. Now I must survey Freiberg and its old walls and towers. With heart-felt affection, your faithful

HELMUTH.

Berlin, Christmas Eve, 1830, 7 o'clock.

DEAR MOTHER,

What can I do better than transport myself in fancy to-day, and at this hour, to be with you where so much fun and bustle are no doubt going on. Next to the fact that I cannot be with you, it is a grief to me that I do not know anything about your present home and surroundings ; but I can see and hear all the party who are enjoying themselves with and for each other, over their various little gifts. Neat little handiwork done by the sisters ; good strong shirts, and stockings with double heels, as if they were meant for Achilles, from you ; tobacco-pouches for the two brothers of the pen, and strong useful things from Fritz ; a bowl of punch in prospect, and above all

the happiness of being together are ample reasons for the merriment of the meeting, and perhaps you are speaking of the absent—nay, certainly. I fancy I can hear it all.

Yes, I, no doubt, am much quieter here. It is not possible to pay calls this evening, and even the theatre allows us to-day to amuse ourselves elsewhere as best we may for our sixteen groschen. But, just as sometimes one is cross without cause, so to-night, *sans crime et sans raison*, I am quite content in my own room and left to my own devices. I really think that the twinkling of the tapers on your Christmas tree is shining in on me.

I must tell you that I have already been two months back in Berlin. I might, to be sure, have told you as much two months ago, and ought properly to have done so; but in consideration of my usual punctuality as a correspondent, and in consideration of the fact that you have not written to me for four months, I hope for mercy. One reason really has been that I constantly expected to be able to give some decisive news as to peace or war, for that to me is of the most immediate im-



portance, because in the event of war I may flatter myself that I should at once be appointed to the General Staff. I will give you on this subject not my own opinion, but that of the superior officers of the Staff: it is that, notwithstanding all the sighing of second-lieutenants, if the French Government is strong enough to withstand the pressure of two parties—Royalists and Republicans alike, both wishing for war that they may get the upper hand in the country—peace will be maintained. But whether they will not succeed in striking their citizen-king out of the programme, in setting aside that old chatterbox Lafayette, *le premier radoteur de France*, and Lafitte,<sup>1</sup> in my opinion is by no means certain, nor is the Revolution of 1830 to be considered as at an end. The Poles, with a discretion which is hardly to be looked for in an insurgent nation, have made no attempt to attack Posen, which is the wisest thing they have done yet. There are about 30,000 men now quartered in that province, but 150,000 could be sent there within three weeks, without withdrawing a single battalion from the Rhine province.

<sup>1</sup> Minister under Louis Philippe.

Not a State in Europe—unless it may be Austria—can at this moment put as many men into the field as Prussia. Prussia, without doubt or exaggeration, is the only power which, besides having an army well supplied with matériel and complete in every detail, is so secure of the feeling of the people that it could conduct a war on the offensive; and since, beyond question, our king at this moment holds the destinies of Europe in his hand, he is all the more to be respected when he, the father of the Empress of Russia and the brother of the Queen of Holland, refuses all mediation. A reaction has already begun in Belgium. This is really a revolution in a negative sense. The principles which in France upset the government, in Belgium occupied the throne; and the clergy and nobility, against whom the French rebelled, in Belgium are fighting against freedom and the constitution.

In such a revolution, where hatred and passion unquestionably play a larger part than reason or necessity, it has always been a mystery to me what can have so embittered two nationalities like the Belgians and the Dutch, that fifteen years of peace

have failed to amalgamate them ; for they have a common origin and a country in common, and long shared the same cruel fate. I have sought the explanation in the history of the two countries, examining it especially from that point of view ; and I have written out what I fancy I have discovered, in the form of a small pamphlet which I propose to publish. This work has taken up a great deal of my time, for as I am at the office till two in the afternoon, and do not get home from dinner till four, and am frequently out in the evening, I have no time but at night ; and very often when you, I hope, are fast asleep, I am worrying myself over their High Mightinesses the States-General ; for, in their pigskin-bound quartos, from which by preference I derive my facts, I find the record not merely of all the gallant Netherlanders did during three centuries, but also of all they said, and that is no small matter. In fact, the trouble has not been light ; I have read above a thousand pages quarto and nearly four thousand octavo. To establish a single simple fact, I have often had to turn over whole volumes, and only that the reader may skip every other

sentence, and not read it after all. However, at the worst I have acquired a tolerably sound knowledge of the condition and history of a country into which events might easily lead a Prussian army.

St. Sylvester's night, 1830, 8 o'clock.

The trumpets and drums of my neighbour's children drove me out of my entrenchments on Christmas night, as, of old, the inhabitants of Jericho. I took refuge in the tent of the Dey of Algiers. Herr Gropius, the decorative painter, has given us a charming moonlight view of that pirates' nest painted from nature. But I will not let the old year set on my delay,<sup>2</sup> but will wish you all every happiness for the New Year, from the bottom of my heart—the year which will be with us in a few hours, and which may have great and important things hidden behind its veil. May it bring war for me, and peace for you! Good-night, dear mother. Adieu.

YOUR HELMUTH.

<sup>2</sup> In the original *Saumseligkeit*, on which the writer remarks —“A happy compound, by which our language combines the ideas of laziness and bliss.”

Berlin, January 11th, 1831.

DEAR MOTHER,

I will make my coffee by your recipe, and I have tinkered the big holes in the strainer with some blotting-paper, which is a great improvement. I have got quite into my old groove again. My greatest recreation is the French play, to which I am a subscriber, and so get tickets at half-price. I have also found a very good place to dine at, but on that I spend but little as a rule; I never breakfast, and often need no supper, as a very good dinner suffices me. I am once more completely fitted out, and by the end of the year hope to have paid all bills. Even at a distance love your

HELMUTH.

Berlin, February 13th, 1831.

DEAR MOTHER,

It is nearly a month since I last wrote to you, and, as I have still no news from you, I am a prey to every form of anxiety. I know, indeed, that a variety of circumstances and occupations may hinder you from writing, but your last is

dated August 8th, of last year, and, as in these six months I have written to you every month regularly, through constant changes of place and occupation, I try to persuade myself that perhaps a letter from you has been lost. But, at any rate, if neither illness nor disaster is the cause of your long silence, I hope, ere long, to be assured of it. I should have many questions to ask, for I have not yet heard a word about your home at Schleswig—but I am hoping for a long letter very soon, and that it will contain full particulars.

I am well. As to my social life, I have been introduced to several family circles which I find pleasant; I often go to the play, and am taking advantage of the last part of my stay in Berlin to enjoy it as frequently as possible. My pamphlet is printed, and published by Mittler, 1831, under the title of "Holland and Belgium in their reciprocal relations." It will be issued to the trade to-morrow, in case it should interest any of you. The Chief of the General Staff has brought out some new papers this month on which possibly much may depend.

In a fortnight I am to join my regiment at

Magdeburg, unless our stay here is unusually prolonged this year, beyond the 1st of March.

The prospects of war seem increasingly near. The Belgian question becomes so complicated that nothing but a regular European war will cut the Gordian knot at last. This is the more likely, because in these days war and peace and the relations of nations are no longer Cabinet questions; in many countries the people themselves govern the Cabinet, and thus an element is introduced into politics on which it is impossible to reckon.<sup>3</sup> An elected citizen-king may honestly aim at preserving the peace of Europe, and yet not be able to guide the people who have appointed him—a farce which, as yesterday's news indicates, is now being performed. And, after all, to be reasonable, must not Louis Philippe naturally prefer to fight Europe with his people, rather than to fight his people with the rest of Europe? But, whatever comes of it, Prussia is armed. She was ready,

<sup>3</sup> This is the first allusion to an idea which, as a General and Field-Marshal, Von Moltke again puts forward in the opening sentence of his work "The Franco-German War of 1870-71." (James R. Osgood, McIlvaine & Co., London, 1891.)

indeed, before any other State in Europe, and though she did not strike, though it was Prussia who, under such temptations to war, maintained peace in Europe, if she herself should be attacked, she can count on the approval of all, especially of Germany ; and public opinion in these days is worth as much as an army.

Here the people are full of new life ; the cafés are crowded with inquirers, and it is hard to get hold of a newspaper, particularly a French one. Politics are the theme in every drawing-room, and discussed in the theatres and the beer-shops. Those officers who have the ready money are providing themselves with pack-saddles and field-equipment, awaiting the war—and we who have not, await the war to get the equipment. Councillors and judges are furbishing up their *landwehr* uniforms ; only the business men pull long faces.

The night before last tremendous applause broke out at the performance of the “Maid of Orleans,” at the passage : “The nation must sacrifice itself for its King !”

The 16th.—Still hoping for a letter. I have



kept this back a day or two. This long silence disturbs me greatly. Pray write at last, and do not forget your

HELMUTH.

Letters addressed Berlin will find me wherever I may be.

Berlin, March 5th, 1831.

DEAR MOTHER,

Right glad was I to have your letter of February 13th; after so long a silence; it arrived soon after I had sent off my last, and I read it with the greatest interest. Thank God that you are all well and cheerful. I delight in transporting myself into your domestic circle, the largest possible in our family. How I wish I could often sit down with you of an evening to chat, or to listen to Gusta's and Loui's music. But the little sketch of your house which you promised me, you forgot to enclose, nor have I any notion in what part of the town or in what street I should find you. And let me know whether you personally prefer Schleswig to Preetz as a residence; as to my sisters I have no doubts; but

it is certainly very dear, and you must have many expenses. It must be a great joy to the musical portion of the family that you have bought a new grand piano. Then again I should like to know with whom you are intimate, and whether you have met with anyone you particularly like. It is a pity you should have no garden—and, by the way, what has become of the cow? But that perhaps is a tender subject with you. Do not be too stay-at-home, but walk out often in the pretty Thiergarten, and avail yourself of the cheerful society of its amusing denizens.

My stay in Berlin has been unexpectedly prolonged. By order from the Cabinet and from the Chief of the General Staff, I and another officer have been appointed to the topographical office, though my regular service here is at an end, and all the other officers have gone off east and west to their respective garrisons. I have the immediate advantage of drawing twenty thalers additional pay, and we may also regard it as a distinction. I have also been officially asked, whether, in the event of war, I should be

inclined to attach myself to the service of the General Staff. So you see how deeply I am interested in these political matters. I am saving at every margin to buy a horse, but where I am to get three from, Heaven alone knows. I may manage to scrape together enough for one. My "Holland and Belgium" has a fair sale. Your booksellers might order it from Mittler; it costs six groschen.

Our court is in mourning for the Duke of Holstein-Gottorp; I am very sorry that he should have died before he could fulfil the expectations which we were justified in forming of him.

We read in the papers here that his Danish Majesty is to grant a constitution or at least representatives, to your people, in consequence of the disturbances in your province; I fancy that from the point of view of administration these members will find a wide field for improvements.

Farewell, dear mother; by the time I write my next letter, a good deal will have changed perhaps in the world. It is a critical period in small things as well as great, and even my

insignificant fate in the world may be decided within a few months. Take care of yourself, and think with affection of your truly loving son

HELMUTH.

DEAR LENA,

I have written off a whole joint of one finger which you will find in the envelope, so you must make the best of a short scrap of a letter this time, in return for your nice long one. But I should like to make it quite beautiful, and to write in verse or in hexameters. This word is derived from *Hexenmeister* (the German for a magician) because good ones are so hard to manage, so I had rather not write them. To make up I enclose the long promised view of Lübeck. The house you see is Miloslav, where I spent this summer; but the town of Lübeck is scarcely visible on account of the rise in the ground, just as in the view on your work-box. Whenever I go to Schleswig again I will make a point of sketching Lübeck from the side.

All the news you send me of Schleswig and its inhabitants interests me greatly, and not less

your account of your own mode of life; I can only beg you to heap coals of fire on my head and put me to shame by writing me a long letter very soon. For the present, good night, dear Lena; the watchman is very offensively proclaiming midnight, 180,000 men are snoring all round me, and I have yet to swallow a night-cap of a few dozen Russian words.

Once more, when I really ought to be asleep, I charge you with greeting for Herr and Frau von Stemann, and you must deliver it with special grace, for if I were not half dead with writing I would put in another letter. Good night.

Berlin, March 10th, 1831.

DEAR MOTHER,

. . . . As to myself, I am now at work in the office of the General Staff, without being attached to it. This much I know: that I and another officer were proposed for it at a council of the Staff officers. So we are regarded as qualified, and that is always the main point. I hope to be ordered this summer to the manœuvres of the General Staff on the Rhine, for the war seems to

have come to nothing ; indeed, all looks like peace. Then I must have a horse, but do not let that worry you. I have already got half the money, so the other half no doubt will follow. I have deposited sixty thalers in the town savings-bank, and I shall get fifty thalers in compensation if I am ordered off. I hope I may soon have good news for you. Adieu, dear mother. Keep up your health and spirits, and do not forget your

HELMUTH.

Berlin, August 7th, 1831.

DEAR MOTHER,

The hope of the expedition to the Rhine, which I should have liked to announce before, has kept me from writing to you this long time. But, alas, that hope seems to have faded. The Chief of the General Staff cannot possibly quit Berlin at a moment when the whole world is on fire. The great comet, which is to be so close to the earth next year that it will almost run us down, when it gets near enough to see will certainly keep aloof, in contempt of orders, to avoid catching Eastern cholera and Western revolu-

tion, war, famine, etc., to diffuse in its celestial rounds.

As regards myself, the doctor has strongly represented to me the necessity of my taking sea baths again this summer, to prevent a trouble from taking root which he ascribes to the nerves of the stomach. I have in fact been confined to my bed, and very miserable for four weeks. The general, to whom I really could hardly have applied for leave, sent me word that no difficulty would be raised in such a case, but that on the contrary, he insisted on my doing everything to restore the health so needful to a soldier; so I shall carry this letter with me to Hamburg. How sorry I shall be to pass so near you, you may imagine; but I have only six weeks' leave and must take full advantage of the baths.

[The end is wanting.]

Berlin, January 13th, 1831.

DEAR MOTHER,

. . . . When I received your letter of December 15th, mine was already gone, and now four weeks have slipped away, during which

nothing has hindered my writing but the wish to give you some decided news. But everything goes on so slowly with me that I must wait for that no longer. That I often thought of you and the sisters at such a time as Christmas and the New Year I need not assure you. From the bottom of my heart I wish you all much, much happiness and blessing. And for you, dear little mother, I can only hope that you may live in health and peace and contentment in the quiet comfort of your home at Schleswig to be the joy of your children for a long time to come. Amen!

A few other matters which I should have been glad to say were settled, are of a literary, or rather of a pecuniary kind. As I was quite unable to pay off a promissory note for a hundred thalers after my journey last autumn, to earn the money I had to call politics to my aid. Then came the protocol of October 15th, laying down the new frontier lines of Holland and Belgium, and within three days a map in revised outline was brought out at the moderate price of three silver-groschen, and copies sent to all the newspapers—nay, and very



well spoken of by them all—but without the authors' names. Now these were a couple of officers, sadly hard up, who had executed the work in three days and printed off 5000 copies. Imagine our ill-luck ! Almost at the same moment an equally keen speculator brought out just such a map, at just the same price—all wrong to be sure, for the good man, with the most loyal liberality, makes Holland a present of the whole of Flanders ; but what does that matter ? The map goes down with the public. We spent a hundred thalers, and have no idea what the consequences of the competition may be. I think we may be glad if we recover our expenses. We shall probably know the result in a day or two, and if I were not afraid of delaying this letter too long I would send the good or bad news.

Another enterprise has been the printing of a little work I am bringing out on the disastrous state of Poland. One wretch of a bookseller would have nothing to say to it now that Warsaw has fallen ; another had no money ; however, he proposed to share expenses and profits. The

expenses would run to from eighty to a hundred thalers; the profits, with good luck, after paying all cost, to about a hundred and fifty per cent. So this is more risk.<sup>4</sup>

Meanwhile one pleasant thing has happened to me. The Censor, through whose hands it had passed, expressed himself at a dinner, where an acquaintance of mine chanced to meet him, in the highest terms of praise of the work, which is to be out in about a week. He asked whether anyone knew this H. von M., and would not believe that he was only a humble second-lieutenant; he had felt convinced that it was the work of a man with fifty years' experience of the world behind him, and so forth. I will take care that a copy is sent to you.

Of more importance than these is an undertaking I have just begun. It is the translation from the English of a work of nearly 6000 pages, namely, "Gibbon's History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," in twelve volumes

<sup>4</sup> The work was brought out in 1832 by G. Fincke of Berlin, whose business passed, in 1843, into the hands of F. A. Röse, and was subsequently dispersed among several firms.

large octavo. The publisher is to give me 500 thalers for this Herculean work<sup>b</sup> as soon as it is printed, and 250 thalers more when five hundred copies are sold. So I must work for a long time before I earn anything; still, the price is worth the trouble. If no interruption interferes, I hope by diligent labour to have finished it in about a year and a half. I utilize every spare quarter of an hour. The work offers no difficulties whatever; indeed I like it, but it takes up so much time that I hardly have a minute to myself; all the more since I am very busy at the office of the General Staff, where my colleague and I are now drawn into all the duties of the General Staff. However, I am well and content; for after all, work, hope, and health, are all that are needful.

So much for myself. But best love to the good little sisters and Ludwig, who occasionally does

<sup>b</sup> This great work of translating Gibbon seems never to have been brought out, though in a letter of April 24, 1833, Von Moltke himself says that the first volume is in the press. The translation is at any rate not to be found in the Royal Library at Berlin, nor does the title appear in any catalogues (500 thalers is between 50*l.* and 60*l.*).

me the pleasure of addressing me—an envelope.  
Always, with faithful love, your

HELMUTH.

Berlin, April 26th, 1832.

DEAR MOTHER,

In the confident belief that my father will have sent you my letter to him of the 5th, I have postponed answering yours until now. You will have learnt from that letter that I have been appointed to the General Staff. This is quite settled; taking my place is a mere matter of detail, and I shall probably do so in the course of the year—*perhaps* as first-lieutenant.

But the appointment brings with it very serious expenses; in the first place I must have a horse. Uncle Ballhorn has been so kind as to advance me 200 thalers for immediate outlay, which I am to repay out of the expected profits of my book; but even under the most favourable circumstances this cannot be till next year. I have, however, bought a really capital black horse for those 200 thalers. As horses are always very dear in Berlin, and the prospect of the war has made

them dearer, and as in my position I cannot ride a bad one, I had to pay twenty-seven Friedrichs d'or for mine, and the rest of the money went in saddle, bridle and stable furniture. I might have had a handsomer horse for a little less, but I am quite satisfied now to have chosen the less showy, but, in the opinion of all judges, the sounder beast, and perfectly free from vice. I am obliged to work him very hard on duty, but you may imagine what care I take of him in every other respect. Uncle Ballhorn, who lives but a few doors from me, has lent me a stall in his stable, and I grudge no attention, pains or expense to keep everything in such a state as to preserve my horse in health and vigour. The great advantage of a good horse is that it costs no more to feed and house than the worst, and the money is only invested, and, barring accident, not lost.

But where is the second horse to come from? That a second is indispensable you will easily believe, when you consider that the journey of the General Staff, though this year it is only to go through Thuringia, involves a ride of sixty miles [about 280 English miles] and that it is neither

customary nor possible to travel without a servant. Occasionally whole days are spent on horseback, and it is not regarded favourably if any order is not carried out at full gallop. One horse cannot suffice for this, and many officers think it scarcely possible to do with two. This is equally true of the manœuvres, and the spring manœuvres begin on May 18th.

For these reasons, dear mother, I am compelled once more to have recourse to your kindness, to beg you, if possible, to help me with 200 thalers. What troubles me is that I should thus again reduce your already narrow income, and it would be a real satisfaction to me, if you would allow me to make good the loss in dividends which you will incur, and which I can very well do. But if circumstances forbid your acceding to my request, I shall of course submit, and thank you with sincere affection for all you have already done for me. The loan is not necessary—not indispensably necessary; for if it comes to the worst I must and will purchase on credit, but I shall then buy dear and at a disadvantage, and be hardly pressed to pay. If, however, you think

you can grant my request, I shall have the capital once for all, and without special ill-luck cannot be a great loser, while I may make money by it. The first appointment to the Staff leads to considerable outlay, and at the same time to a reduction of pay; the further steps necessitate no further purchases, and bring in better pay and larger allowances. So this certainly is the moment when I must need help, and I hope it will be the last. So, dear mother, I commend my petition to your kindness, and if granting it does not involve you personally in any disadvantageous or unpleasant consequences, I beg you to manage it for me. It is, of course, to be understood that I propose that these 200 thalers should be taken out of your capital, for out of your income it is quite impossible, and I would not accept it. An early decision, at any rate, is of importance to me, since, as I have said, the manœuvres begin at the end of May.

I hope with all my heart that this letter will find you well and happy, and remain, with true affection, your

HELMUTH.

The young officer was consulted by his mother as to his opinion of the love affair of a relation, which seemed likely to lead to an engagement. To this he replied:

Berlin, May 15th, 1832.

DEAR MOTHER,

. . . As you may suppose I, being insufficiently instructed, and X. being personally unknown to me, should carefully refrain from any suggestion or advice in such a matter. But, though I should never try to persuade her to the alliance, neither should I advise her to refuse it out of hand. All that I have heard of X. seems to me to indicate a fine character. My personal conviction is that every marriage is a risk which we blindly rush into—for that we should know and judge calmly of the being with whom we join our lot is too much to ask, since we do not love, know, or judge ourselves, and since what we find in married life depends perhaps as much on ourselves as on our partner. If we call only cold reason into council, it is impossible not to see that it is granted to very few men to meet in real life with the ideal of which each certainly dreams of once; and even fewer are those who do not wake all the more painfully from



that dream which must indeed be the greatest happiness. When feeling is strung to the highest pitch, every inevitable deficiency and every imperfection becomes a discord in the pure harmony, and the higher the expectation, the greater must the disappointment be. This extremely prosaic view is perhaps, nevertheless, the right one, and explains the reason why many *mariages de raison* are happier than those of inclination. . . . In short, I believe that ecstatic love-making and married happiness are not, to say the least of it, inseparably allied, and that so long as there is no aversion, and no evil quality to contend with, sincere, deep, and happy affection may follow on marriage. That X. is a clever man and a rich one is a desirable thing in a secondary degree, but certainly should not influence her decision. This, her own character, and the school in which she has grown up, seem to me in favour of the affair.

I shall be in Berlin till the middle of July; then we move to Erfurt, the rendezvous of the General Staff, whence probably a reconnaissance will be effected of the Main, and as far as Bamberg. This expedition is entirely on horseback, and will

take two months. I am ready with two volumes of my work, and shall now discuss the business with my rather dilatory publisher. Farewell for to-day, dear mother. Hoping most sincerely that you are well and happy, I remain, with true affection, your

HELMUTH.

Berlin, September 28th, 1832.

DEAR MOTHER,

. I yesterday received your eagerly-expected letter of the 23rd. It is really shameful that mine to you should have been so late in reaching you. I can only wield the pen with difficulty, as a convalescent; I was thrown, towards the end of the manœuvres, and was rather badly bruised. . . .

I am most anxious to know the results of Wilhelm's examination. What hopes and claims may he not found on such efforts? Would Wilhelm, if he is now more the master of his own time, feel inclined to take part in the translation of Gibbon? He would find the work easy, and perhaps interesting; and, perhaps, too, he might be glad to earn something by such suitable work.

If you write to him pray make the suggestion. I should be very glad, for with so many interruptions for months at a time, I see that I can never finish the work unaided. I am working myself to a wreck over it. Adieu, dear mother, with best love, your

HELMUTH.

Berlin, November 24th, 1832.

Hearty thanks, dear mother, for your kind letter of the 15th of this month, containing so much good and pleasant news, particularly that Wilhelm and Fritz seem, after such long and earnest efforts, to have gained a better position. If the former, even after passing so well and getting on to the General Staff, still gains no advantage from his appointment (and yet this is said to be the best career of all) it certainly seems to me that with us the requirements are less and the pay more liberal. I read with pleasure that Fritz's modest and conscientious labours are rewarded according to their merit. I remember Major Linde very well, and know how we then esteemed him above most of our teachers, a poor set for the most part. We three eldest

must thankfully acknowledge that our efforts are gradually earning for us a better and more independent existence, which we may say without conceit we owe to ourselves next to God, and the help given us by you and my father. And Adólf and Ludwig are in the right road.

As to myself, I am well, and have quite got over my accident. Four of our little corps have already been sent to the Rhine, and I have been for some time in daily expectation of orders to the same effect. Everything now waits on the future ; but of that I say nothing, for before these lines reach you everything may be changed.

My daily life is as follows : at seven in the morning I have my breakfast and set to work. Lately I have been very busy with a *précis* of military history, entrusted to me by the General Staff. At nine o'clock, whatever the weather, I mount one of my horses, both very good beasts, and take a brisk ride of a mile or two [about  $4\frac{1}{2}$  to English 9 miles] and dismount at the office of the General Staff where I am on duty till two o'clock, and where I read a number of German, English, and French newspapers. Then

I go to the café for dinner, and afterwards find another horse waiting for me at my door, and go for a short ride in the Thiergarten. Then I work from four to eight at my translation, and after that usually go into society. If Wilhelm wishes to make an attempt with the work, I should be very glad. I hope to finish the fifth volume this year. I should be extremely pleased if Ludwig could send me soon the sixth, he shall then receive directly the larger half of his pay. Only, if it is inconvenient to him, and he has much other work to do, I will not press him. If I had not to steal the time for my letters, and then were generally already quite tired and sick of writing, I would willingly start a correspondence with him. Adieu for to-day, dear mother. With fond love, your

HELMUTH.

Berlin, February 28th, 1833.

DEAR MOTHER,

I received your kind letter of the 23rd, and all the good news it contained, with great joy.

As to me, I am very well. I have been engaged

—I may say with business and dissipation alternately—early and late, for during the carnival pleasure is treated as a serious affair. Almost without wishing it I have been dragged into the vortex of society from which it is not easy to escape. Various occupations fill each day. I work in the mornings at a criticism of the strategic possibilities of the Thuringian forest or a historical *précis* of the campaign of 1762; the forenoon is dedicated to office work, in the afternoon everyone appears on horseback on the Promenade, and on fine days, such as we are now having, it is brilliant. The fine horses, the crowds of uniforms and equipages, and the close throngs of smartly-dressed and fashionable women make this very amusing. After dinner (sometimes, however, I fall asleep over it) I study political economy, although my own gives me quite enough to do. In the evening the hair-dresser calls and arranges my hair in the most tasteful style; and at eight there is a ball at this prince's or that minister's. I only remain there just as long as I find I have agreeable partners, and often before going to bed I translate a few pages of Gibbon. During the last fortnight I have

been to eleven balls, and have danced every dance whilst there, and I find it agrees with me. Last Sunday evening I was commanded by the king to a *déjeuner dansant*. These parties are small and select, and it is esteemed a distinction to be included. It is a curious fashion; you go at eleven o'clock, dance one waltz, then the gentlemen go into one room and the ladies into another; everyone receives a very pretty flower (artificial), leads the lady who has the flower that matches to the table which is decorated with the same flower. The so-called breakfast is really a luncheon, with the usual kickshaws, with turtle-soup, oysters, caviar, *paté de foie gras*, and other happy results of the cook's art and suitable drinks. Then all join in a grand Polonaise in the dancing room, where a formal ball commences, kept up after the candles are lighted till eight o'clock, when the Court goes to the theatre. You can imagine what careful toilettes are arranged that they may stand the test of daylight. But these proceedings will soon come to an end; the foreign nobility are already leaving.

To-day four weeks, on March 30th, the word of command will be given, whether I shall be enrolled

in the General Staff or not. I may hope in the meantime to send you good news. This promotion brings a fair increase of pay, but it will involve an expensive equipment. The uniform is one of the handsomest and most expensive that we have. It is blue, with a crimson collar and facings embroidered in silver, hat with white feather, sword, silver sash and epaulettes.

Concerning Gibbon, I wish ardently to be rid of it. I hardly feel justified in spending so much time in a secondary occupation, but necessity forces me to it. I shall soon have finished the sixth volume, that is half of the whole dreadful work, and the first volume is already in print. I shall not undertake such another work again, as I shall not need to, when this is finished. When Ludwig has completed his volume I hope to send him directly forty thalers in cash, but I think he goes to work too elaborately. A work of nearly 5000 pages cannot be written like a pamphlet. With fond love, yours,

HELMUTH.



Berlin, April 24th, 1833.

DEAR MOTHER,

These lines have been delayed a long time. You will meanwhile have heard from father the news that I have been promoted, and am now a first-lieutenant. At present my garrison is in Berlin, but as the next change in the General Staff of an army corps will affect me, my remaining here any longer is uncertain. The garrisons to which I may go are Königsberg, Breslau, Posen, Magdeburg, Münster or Coblenz. I have gained considerably in salary, for I receive thirty-six thalers, besides ten thalers ration money, as well as cavalry service and three full rations. On the other hand, I must keep a servant and two horses, must live in the dearest garrisons in the kingdom, and have been obliged to newly equip myself in the very handsome, but expensive uniform. The prospect meanwhile is good ; and I may hope to be a captain in two years.

How is Ludwig's translation getting on ? I expect in a month to have finished the seventh volume, and shall then have reached Ludwig's work. It is terrible work ; if Ludwig only has

time and inclination to share it! When he has finished his volume two-thirds of the work are done. I also hope to be able to send him his fee directly it is delivered, although I as yet have not received a pfenning. The first volume is in print. Several times, when doing other work, as I have caught sight of the remaining volumes, my heart has sunk.

With fond love, yours,

HELMUTH.

Berlin, July 23rd, 1833.

DEAR MOTHER,

I received your anxiously expected letter of the 18th, together with my sisters' and Ludwig's yesterday; I beg they will excuse me if in the hurry of starting I only answer them summarily to-day, and each kindly share his with the other. Gustchen's betrothal, or imminent betrothal, gives me great pleasure. By this she secures the best guarantee for a happy future. I will not deny that I am in favour of *parties de raison*; a passionate attachment can only decrease.

I beg you to inform Ludwig as concerning

the Gibbon that he has more time than is at all satisfactory. The publisher finds many difficulties in producing the publication; the chief difficulty was the want of several thousand thalers ready money in advance. He has assured me, nevertheless, that now all difficulties have been removed, the printing of the first volume has begun, and a new volume will appear every month. But since one must always make a considerable allowance for a publisher's word, the eight volumes will hardly be out in eight months, and Ludwig can do the work quite at his leisure. The notes remain untranslated; only where alterations seem necessary I beg he will note them, stating the number of the line on a separate sheet. I have got as far as the 50th chapter in the middle of the IXth volume. Now there will be a prolonged interval, but I hope next year by a last desperate effort to bring it to a conclusion.

My lovely Italian journey has fallen through; politics interfered in the business, and his Majesty will give no one any leave at the present time, particularly for that revolutionary country.

It was then proposed I should go to France in

order to attend the manœuvres at Compiègne, St.-Omer, and Luneville. But they sent a staff officer, so now I am going to-day on an official journey to Lausitz, but I hope to get my furlough, even with its limitation to travelling within the Austrian States. In that case I shall travel by way of Vienna to Milan. I therefore beg you will not write to me till I have given you fresh news, for as yet I can in no way fix dates, where and when I shall be at any place. Adieu, dear mother; my boxes stand half-packed, the horses saddled. Good-bye, yours,

HELMUTH V. MOLTKE.

Finished August 9th, 1833.

Berlin, May 27th, 1834.

DEAR MOTHER,

It is a very long time since I wrote to you, but I have very often thought of you. I am sincerely grieved to hear that you unfortunately are suffering so much. God grant you alleviation and recovery, my kind little mother. I knew you would bear pain with firmness and resignation; it is the peace that comes of a good and clear

conscience. It has so often entered my mind that of all benefits early maternal instruction is the greatest and most lasting. The whole character and all that is good in it are built up on this foundation, and since you have brought up eight children to be honourable men, their gratitude and God's blessing must rest on you.

You are so accustomed, dear mother, to seek your own happiness in our welfare, that I trust our dear Guste's marriage will afford you pleasure. How I wish I could be present with you on the occasion, but urgent reasons prevent it. But I hope in the autumn to get a longer furlough and more easily. After such a long separation I long to see you and my sisters again.

As far as I am personally concerned, I have every reason to be contented—and I am. My position is as pleasant as it could possibly be, my income good, and prospects even better. And for a long time I have been remarkably well. There appears to exist no further trace of my old, deeply-rooted and painful heart-complaint. I acknowledge this gratefully. With sincere love, your

HELMUTH.

Berlin, June 29th, 1834.

DEAR MOTHER,

Our General-Staff journey is this time towards the Hartz mountains; but the preliminary exercises and the reconnoitring will take me first to Dresden, and from thence I hope to make a trip through the whole of the Erzgebirge by way of Teplitz and Carlsbad to Eger.

We set out in the very beginning of July, and only return at the end of August. I should like to have a good account of you, dear mother, before I start. God grant that you may be tolerably well.

As soon as the autumn manœuvres are over (which will be as far off as the middle of September), I have the prospect of being sent on service by my chief to Copenhagen. Now that a steamer goes from Stettin I can get from this to Copenhagen in two days. Afterwards I go by steamer to Kiel, and expect to be with you in October. I am already greatly rejoicing that I shall see you again after such a long separation.

I shall also be glad to see Augusta keeping her own house, and to make our brother-in-law's

acquaintance; are they now at Schleswig or at Kiel? and which is the Burts' house?

I have begged my father to pay Ludwig 24 thalers, Prussian currency, which will, I hope, be welcome to him. The immediate honorarium (till 500 copies are sold) amounts, as I wrote to him, to 500 thalers; and as there are twelve volumes, this comes to  $\frac{500}{12} = 41\frac{2}{3}$  thalers. I have already got to the eleventh volume of this gigantic work; but now it must be stopped for half a year. Farewell, for to-day, dear mother. I pray God every day to keep you in health, and preserve you to us for many long years yet. With truest love, your

HELMUTH.

Berlin, January 8th, 1835.

DEAR MOTHER,

I write you only a few lines, to thank you affectionately for your kind reception, and to tell you that I got back here safe and sound. As to my further fate, nothing has as yet been heard, and I am still in the same position as before.

My new room is very nice, but even smaller than yours. It faces the same way as your sitting-

room, and your star near the \* \* \* \* \* sparkles every evening in front of my window, and reminds me of you. Best love and farewell till I have further news. Your

HELMUTH.

Berlin, February 3rd, 1835.

DEAR MOTHER,

I only yesterday received your dear letter of the 18th of last month, because, by an oversight of the letter-carrier, it was sent back again to Schleswig. Since then you will have heard from my father that, on the very day when you wrote, Sunday the 18th, I was delightfully surprised by having the Order of St. John conferred on me. The decoration, which is very pretty, is precious to me as a proof of the kind feeling and satisfaction of my superiors. Of all the orders which I could possibly have had, this is by far the most gratifying to me, and in Germany one of the most highly esteemed. And as it is bestowed only on men of noble birth and distinguished family, it is the object of much ambition and no little envy to many. What I am now



anxiously waiting for, is to know whether I shall be made captain on March 31st.

Take care of yourself, and spare yourself, dear mother; you have a strong constitution, but you should take better care of yourself. Adieu for to-day, dear mother. You shall soon have a few lines again from your faithful and loving son.

HELMUTH.

Berlin, March 16th, 1835.

DEAR MOTHER,

Although I have long owed you a letter, I must postpone sending this for another fortnight, to announce to you at once what the decisive 30th of March may possibly do for me. Meanwhile, it is a pleasure to talk with you in fancy. I only hope with all my heart that you and the others are all well. The New Year is such a bad time. I have a slight *grippe*, and hope to be let off with that, but I am struggling with vague anticipations, which, however, will be certainties by the time you receive these lines. So much at any rate is certain: that one officer of our little corps will be

sent to Coblenz on the Rhine, and two to Königsberg in Prussia.

I have begun a lawsuit against my publisher. I am curious to see whether justice will help me. I have been most averse to taking this step, and have at the same time made overtures of peace, and it would seem that he is inclined to compromise. The day before yesterday I received a huge document from Rome. It was my patent from Prince Henry, the Grand Master of the Order of St. John.

I hardly know what more news to give you but that my bay is well, and in a race with four other horses beat them all. My astronomical knowledge has been much extended by watching your star, for I never before observed that all the stars move round in the heavens. It must now be visible in the evening exactly opposite Ludwig's window—but very high up. I regard it as a lucky star.

The 24th.—The 30th will soon be here. On Monday wish me good luck.

The 30th.—I was made captain to-day. In a few days I shall be able to let you know whether I shall be ordered off anywhere in consequence

of this promotion. Adieu for to-day, dear mother. I hasten to send this letter off by to-day's post.

HELMUTH.

Berlin, April 21st, 1835.

DEAR MOTHER,

For the present I remain in peace here, with the Central General Staff. My chief tells me that the plan with regard to Paris cannot yet be carried out, but "that I am in any case to hold myself in readiness for that post." While I was ill, he rejoiced me by a Royal Cabinet message, of which this is an exact copy :

"With your report, dated January 24th of this year, I received the collected notes of Captain von Moltke of the General Staff, on the Danish land and marine forces. While thanking you for sending them, I regard this very thorough piece of work with much approval.

"(Signed) Frederick Wilhelm.

"Berlin, April 15th, 1835.

"To Lieutenant-General Krauseneck."

As I shall now, for at least a year, remain in

my old position, I must now see about replacing my second horse.

With regard to my promotion, four of my seniors in my old regiment are still second-lieutenants. I have passed over their heads and the whole body of twelve first-lieutenants. Even in the Guards the men who got their commission at the same time with me, are only just made first-lieutenants, and I am perhaps the only captain in the army who entered so late as 1822. Thus I have made good the four years I lost in the Danish service.

As the fruit of my savings I enclose you a scrap of linen; no, to tell the real truth, I stole it. It is a bit of the shirt of a priest who lived 2040 years before the birth of Christ. I know but little else about the good man, and I believe none of his sermons are extant. As, however, he had about 1700 ells of shirting about his body, he will forgive me the theft, no doubt. But is it not really amazing that they should have known how to weave this Byssus 4000 years ago?

In September the Vth and VIth Army Corps are to unite—a fourth of our whole army—for manœuvring in the lovely neighbourhood of

Liegnitz, at the foot of the Riesengebirge. From thence we shall, no doubt, be sent to the scene of the Russian manœuvres, which are to take place at Kalisch on the Silesian-Polish frontier. Thus we shall not be back in Berlin before the end of October. So I must have good horses. Adieu for to-day, dear mother; I hope this will find you well. With much love, yours,

HELMUTH.

Berlin, June 20th, 1835.

DEAR MOTHER.

Very many thanks for your welcome letter, from which I gather that you have got well through this very bad spring. I hope the tremendous heat which we have had since has not been too much for you, and that your little garden may have brought you some refreshment.

As for myself I should certainly have written to you sooner, if I had not just now been overwhelmed with business. Immediately after my father's departure, I went on duty for four weeks with the Alexander Regiment of Grenadiers, which is quartered in barracks at the very opposite end

of the city. The daily ride through the paved streets in the broiling heat has tanned me quite brown, but also made me quite strong. Besides this it is the great time for examinations, and within fifteen days I have to examine 143 ensigns and cadets for promotion, and also to finish some writing which has to be done in a hurry. But the more a man has to do the better he does it.

I have also concluded a bargain for a horse. I have bought a second horse for forty louis d'or, so that I have actually one hundred louis d'or in horseflesh in the stable. And they are two very handsome, sound, and capital beasts—*absit omen*, and as a good trooper I spit—few officers in the garrison can show better. Such a horse eats no more than a bad one, and I expect with good usage to get ten or fifteen years' service out of them. I may also observe that they will almost immediately be paid for. I have come to a legal compromise with my publisher, by which he is to pay me the really miserable sum of 166 thalers; but then I am released from finishing or revising the work. Now, as the man is a perfect greyhound for doubling, I am very well content to have

got off so well, for only twelve thalers of legal costs. He has already paid me 100 thalers; the 66 are to be paid at once. The work is really out of all proportion to the trouble it has given me, and the whole sum is little more than half of what I have had to pay for my grey. In consideration of the superfluous worry, and in obedience to your advice, I am offering myself a pint of Moselle a day this month, and I find myself on the whole generally ready for my feed.

Our expedition on horseback will scarcely begin before the middle of July. We have as yet had no further orders, and hardly know more than that it is to be into Silesia, and probably to Liegnitz, Neisse, and the hill country. We are required to be ready to set out at a moment's notice.

Now farewell, dear mother; God keep you well and in good spirits. Take some care of yourself, and do not spare the droschki in this fine weather, but enjoy the beauties of the neighbourhood. With best love and attachment, yours,

HELMUTH.

Wiegandsthal, in the Isergebirge,

July 26th, 1835.

DEAR MOTHER,

I have several times already sat down to write to you, but in my present mode of life it is hard to find a quiet moment. But to-day, being Sunday, when you are probably at church and thinking of me, I will make a serious effort, and give you the most immediate news. My duty this time has brought me to the Bohemian frontier and the Riesengebirge. I have had heavy marches, but both my horses, thank God, are well and game. When I arrive at quarters, I have at once to report on the roads we have reconnoitred ; by that time I am fearfully hungry and tired, or perhaps have to inspect some old castle, or fortress, or clamber up the hills ; and there is little time or strength left for letter writing. But I have thought of you many a time when gazing at a glorious view from a height, and wished that you could be up there also to see it, just for a quarter of an hour.

The finest thing I have yet seen in the course of my journey is the ruin of the old castle of Oybin, near Zwickau, on the Saxon-Bohemian frontier.



Never in my life have I seen such an inaccessible hill. Perpendicular cliffs of sandstone, more than 100 feet high on every side, and only one stairway of some hundreds of steps leading into the stronghold. This is almost entirely destroyed, but the chapel remains nearly uninjured ; it is in the finest style of Gothic and admirably built. Nothing is gone but the roof and topmost groining, and this is replaced to some extent by the fine light-green birch-trees which have their roots in the old walls. The capitals of the pillars, and the arches of the windows are elaborately carved, and being wrought in stone are still perfect. The steps of the altar and confessional, the sacristy, and the cells give a good idea of what it must have been. One wall of this lofty building is very remarkable ; it is part of the rock itself, and of course is one with the hill. The body of the church has been hewn out, and outside it a path of about four feet wide divides this wonderful wall from the mass of rock. Thus the whole wall is in one piece. What a labour, before powder was known to blast it ! And the view from the castle is even finer than the place itself.

It was very interesting also to see Friedland in Bohemia, Wallenstein's castle. When I arrived the old fortress had been struck by lightning only a few hours before. It had burnt for about an hour, but the fire had been got under and only the roof was destroyed.

The only original portrait extant of that great man is extremely remarkable. As is generally the case, the face is quite unlike the man as one has imagined him. His daughter is wonderfully pretty, but her name was not Thekla but Katharina; nor did she retire into a convent with Fräulein Neubrunn, but married an Austrian Count. She must be forgiven, since Piccolomini was so far in the wrong that he never existed. I have climbed the heights above beautiful Gorlitz from a point high up, and yesterday early I went up the Tafelfichte. In the evening I rode to the ruins of the old hill fortress of Greiffenstein—splendid! on the top of a cone of basalt. The whole range of the Isergebirge lies below, but the giants which towered up were as usual wrapped in clouds.

You will scarcely find my little town in your

geography; it consists of a collection of poor weavers whose golden age is past.

The poor Silesian, with the greatest industry and application, cannot spin the flax which grows at his door as cheaply as the English with their machinery can spin the cotton which they have to procure from another hemisphere. I shall try to give an impetus to trade, by buying at Hirschberg, the chief centre of the Silesian linen industry, a new shirt, as one of mine has been reduced to *charpie* by the long rides. I am already far in among the mountains, but to-day I go even further, to Flinsberg, a watering-place in a high mountain valley without an exit. On one side rises the Tafelfichte, 3420 feet high, and on the other the Geiersberg, 2343 feet high. The horses are already saddled, so adieu for to-day.

Dear mother, I am likely to take this letter with me to Warmbrunn. At present I am travelling alone and meet my fellow officers again later on. But I carry small copies of Montaigne and "Childe Harold" in my saddle pocket. Yet I must confess that I do not often

want to read ; the grand book of nature is spread so wide open here, and is so magnificently and legibly written with mountains, castles and towns, that one's eyes are not injured as they are with the small type. I spend all the time I am able to spare in sketching the lovely castles and their surroundings ; perhaps I may be able some day to show you these pages, they constitute my diary.

Now, good night, dear mother, I am thoroughly tired after a ride to Schweidnitz. I started at six o'clock and only got home again at eight o'clock in the evening. God preserve you. With love. Yours,

HELMUTH.

After Captain von Moltke had been at the Royal manœuvres in Silesia as well as at the Russo-Prussian review at Kalisch, he was ordered to Constantinople, which postponed his expected visit home for four years. The following letters will offer a welcome supplement to his famous "*Briefe über Zustände und Begebenheiten in der Türkei.*" (Letters on affairs and events in Turkey.)

Vienna, October 15th, 1835.

DEAR MOTHER,

I have not, as you will see by the picture

above,<sup>1</sup> got very far on my journey, nevertheless I will let you know from hence that I am well and happy. Unfortunately I have not yet had any news of you, but as there is a post to-day from Berlin it may perhaps bring me something. I sincerely trust that you are satisfied with your state of health, and that all goes well with you. I often think of you all so far away.

Not before the 17th of the month could I leave Breslau, as my travelling companion, Herr von Bergh, who is adjutant in the 1st regiment of Guards, was prevented coming earlier by official business. I paid a visit in the meantime to Schloss Briese, not far from Breslau, where I had quarters during the survey, and where I was welcomed as an old friend.

I arrived here on Saturday, the 10th, at day-break, and took up my quarters at the "Golden Lamb" in the Jägerzeile. I have already lodged here once before, and my father used also to come to this inn. But since then the little "Lamb" has become an enormous palace, with a fine

<sup>1</sup> Letter-paper, with a representation of St. Stephen's cathedral.

outlook over the Danube and the bastion towards St. Stephen's.

Vienna is a lovely town just because the streets are irregular, for nothing is more tedious than long, straight streets. The crooked streets have been gradually built as required ; such towns have an historical past and appeal to the fancy, whilst those drawn by a ruler are built and regulated by the taste of an individual.

The splendour of the shops is extraordinary, and one is in a state of constant temptation to buy. Every house, besides having a number, has a sign, and these are often so well painted that one stops astonished before them. Some of these signboards are by quite well-known masters and worthy to hang in a picture gallery. The "Maid of Honour" stands next to the "White Wolf;" the young "King of Hungary" and the "Archbishop of Cologne" are opposite "Amor" and the "Maid of Orleans."

The centre of the town, the Downing-street of Vienna, is the so-called *Graben*.

You see written on a palace in large characters, "Gunkel." Gunkel is the first notability amongst

the clothes manufacturers, otherwise called a tailor. I put myself into his hands for a consultation *en fait de toilette*. After he had looked at my suit critically, Herr von Gunkel wished to know whom I employed. I named Kley in Berlin. "Not bad," said the artist, "but quite a failure!" He wished to see me in dark-green, informed me that it was a form of insanity to wear a white waistcoat, and that the only saving grace lay in a black cravat.

The driving in the streets is extraordinary. They are narrow and wonderfully paved, but without a footpath, and the carriages and cabs, instead of going at a steady trot, drive quite close up to the houses, so that one really has to take care. No wonder that having to give all my attention to this, I am constantly losing my way in these high, narrow streets. But then I have only to look up, and as a rule I find old St. Stephen with his tall spire showing the right way, or beckoning me to begin my wanderings again, starting from this sure point. Truly every way leads by St. Stephen, and every morning I linger a few minutes, standing under the huge

arches and between the slender, tall pillars that are cut out of beautiful stone.

You may also ascend to the top of the tower ; 757 steps lead up to the so-called Starhemberg seat : a little bench in a niche, from which you can see away over the vast fen-lands and trace Moravia and Hungary in the extreme distance. It was here that old Starhemberg sat with an anxious heart, awaiting the continually closer approach of the Turkish forces. The wide plain was covered with their tents and horses ; the heavy chain, weighing a hundred thousand hundredweight, which now hangs in the imperial arsenal, was forged in order to bar the Danube. The Austrian forces were annihilated, the imperial court had fled to Linz, the State, as usual, was torn by disunion, and no help to be hoped for. At that time there were no suburbs outside Vienna, which to-day cover about ten times the space of the original town. Those same walls as they now stand, with only a few small outworks on one side, were the bulwarks of Christendom. Hunger and sickness had reduced the city to extremity ; it was a matter of days and hours ; as the crescent moon



shone over St. Stephen's, so Islam would triumph over the capital of the Christian world. How different it might have been in Europe. Sobieski's troopers decided then the fate of the world.

From Starhemberg's seat you may ascend another 100 steps to the top of the tower. From thence you can see the whole of Vienna like a map. The Glacis, which divide the suburbs from the city, and the bastion, make one of the loveliest promenades in the world; the castles and country seats in the neighbourhood, the near Kahlenberg and the distant Carpathians and Alps, which are already covered with snow.

As Bergh has very good introductions, we are usually invited out to dinner. To-day we were particularly well received by a Hungarian grandee, who has 50,000 dependents in Croatia, and he placed five different wines before us, all of which he had grown on his estate. We are taking very valuable letters of introduction with us from home to Pesth, Semlin, Bucharest, Constantinople, Smyrna, Athens. As we have introductions everywhere to the ambassadors or the most influential people, these will

very materially assist our proceedings and make the journey as pleasant as it will be useful.

We shall go from this to Presburg early on Sunday the 18th, and then by steamboat to Pesth, where we remain two days, then to Belgrade and up the Danube to Rustschuk, nearly 200 miles [about 936 English miles] from Vienna. We shall be in Rustschuk on the 30th of the month, then go to Prince Ghika at Bucharest, and from thence on horseback with the Tartar to Constantinople.

This is almost the only possible mode of traveling, the best and absolutely safe; only rather fatiguing, and it will be rather cool on the Balkans. But I shall procure a large sheepskin in Hungary.

I hope, by means of the Embassy to be able to write to you from Constantinople. I am sorry to say I have had no letter here from you. I beg you will certainly send me a few lines saying how you are, dear mother, also giving me news about my brothers and sisters, and let the letter (on very thin paper and not crossed) be addressed to the *poste restante*, Naples. I expect to reach there

in the course of January, and beg you will write some time about Christmas or the New Year, and give me, please God, good news of you all.

I think I shall be in Berlin by March. Affectionate greeting to Adolf, Loui, and my sisters. May you all be well and happy. Now farewell, dear mother. God bless you. With fond love,  
yours,

HELMUTH.

Buyukdéré, near Constantinople.

November 30th, 1835.

DEAR MOTHER,

It is a very long time since I had any news from you. I hope you are well and happy. God guard and keep you! If, as I hope, you get these lines for Christmas, you will at least see that I have successfully surmounted several difficulties, that I have kept well, and have been rewarded by a delightful sojourn in an entirely new world.

I only wish you could spend a quarter of an hour here at my window, under which the waves

of the Bosphorus splash as clear as crystal, exactly as if I were sitting in the cabin of a man-of-war.<sup>2</sup>

Those hills which are so near that one can count the windows in the houses, are in another continent—are in Asia. To the right you see in the little green valley a group of gigantic plane-trees, they bear the name of Godfrey of Bouillon, for it is supposed that he rested under them when he went as a crusader to Palestine. The old Genoese castle rises up out of that mountain, with the arms of the Italian Republic and the date 1100 over the doorway. On the left you see a lake; it is the Black Sea, the dreaded Pontus Euxinus. Quickly, noiselessly, the light caiques pass by under my window, powerful war-ships anchor close to the houses, and the steamers fly past with waving flags. The extensive burial grounds are really cypress forests. Laurels grow to trees here, and the Italian pines, with their soft, bright green, contrast well with the almost black and motionless cypress trees. Roses are still in bloom in the

<sup>2</sup> He is thus represented in a picture which he sent to his mother in a later letter of January 10th, 1837.

gardens everywhere, and we have days when it is almost too hot.

When I get back to Berlin I will send you my sketch-book. But I sincerely entreat you to send me news of yourself to Naples, Eduard Ballhorn will take care of it for me. You may imagine how many questions I want to ask you.

On Christmas Eve I shall be with you all in thought, to drink to your health, I hope, either in Athens or in Alexandria. I expect to be in Naples by the middle of January, and shall write to you again from thence.

Good-bye for to-day, dear mother, only keep well and take care of your strength. Lie down and rest a little—you may well do so, for you have worked long enough for us. Once more a thousand greetings.

With fond love and thanks, yours,

HELMUTH.

P.S.—The rose leaves I am sending you are from Asia, and that you may see that the money has not yet run out, I also enclose a Turkish para.

Your lovely star has lighted me every morning early, when I have ridden out before sunrise.

I must open my letter again to take out the leaves and the para, or else it cannot be fumigated and go with the despatches from the Embassy. We still have here a few cases of plague, and prudential measures are still in force. For the rest, nobody thinks about the plague, and there is no more danger than of a tile falling on my head.

To-day we start on an excursion into Asia Minor, and expect to be back in four days, when our rooms will be ready in the Hotel of the Embassy at Pera.

I hope to pay you the promised para personally next year. Adieu, dear mother.

Buyukdéré, December 1st, 1835.

Arnautekiöj, near Constantinople,

February 9th, 1836.<sup>3</sup>

DEAR MOTHER,

I received letters by yesterday's post from Cousin Eduard, but, alas, no enclosures from you,

In this letter passages occur like the contents of the letters under date of February 9th and 12th, 1836, printed in the "Türkischen Briefe." (Letters from Turkey.)

father, or my brothers and sisters, for which I had hoped so much. Meanwhile, Eduard writes in his last account that you are all, thank God, well, and since this is the first news I have had of you, and now only in great haste, for five months, I am naturally much delighted. I trust these lines may also find you in good health and happy.

I do not yet know if my stay here will be prolonged or not. We are waiting for letters from Berlin by the next post which will decide the matter. It has been most interesting in any case to me to spend the winter in new surroundings.

The Seraskier has been so well satisfied with some small work of mine that he yesterday presented me with a snuff-box set with brilliants, which must be worth I should think at least 100 louis d'or, and will cover the expenses of my journey so far. He has also placed at my disposal a horse out of his stable with a handsome bridle and red velvet saddle; it stands in Count Königsmark's <sup>4</sup> stable at Pera, and I now ride all about the neighbourhood. A *sais* is told off to take care of it, and a Kavass, armed with a cutlass,

<sup>4</sup> Prussian Ambassador to the Porte.

yataghan, and loaded pistols, walks in front of me whenever I go in Constantinople, so that I can scarcely ever be rid of him.

I have been going for some days to the house of a dragoman who is the Seraskier's chief interpreter, and who translates into Turkish whatever I write down in French. Business gets done very slowly here; happily they write less in Turkey than in our country. Writing generally is done here about as fast, and in very much the same way, as ladies' worsted work at home; that is to say, sitting on a sofa with your legs crossed and a long strip of paper on your knees, on which the characters are made with a reed-pen, from right to left. The Armenian with whom I live has a large household, and is reckoned here as a wealthy and important personage. I want for nothing; the table is excellent, and the whole insight into a household on the Turkish plan is extremely amusing. Every other dish is sweet, and besides these, ten dishes of cold *hors d'œuvre* stand on the table, from which everyone helps himself as he likes between whiles. There are oysters, shell-fish or caviar, cheese, olives, goat's milk curd, salads, sardines, cray-fish,



lobster, peppers, onions, and fruits of various kinds. Coffee is served six or seven times a day in tiny cups. The preparation of it is quite unlike our way of infusing coffee; the grounds are poured into the cup with the liquor and without sugar or milk; but one soon gets used to thinking it very good. Preserves are handed round with it; each one takes a spoonful into his mouth, and then drinks water to wash it down; and everyone smokes. I myself can already take a pull with some, though very small satisfaction, at a pipe six feet long, with a large amber mouthpiece and a small red clay bowl. The worst thing is that not a room ever has a stove. People sit—for no one ever thinks of walking, for months at a time—wrapped in furs with their legs under them, and scarcely trouble themselves as to whether the doors are open or shut. However, in the middle of the room stands a table covered with a large quilted cloth, and under it a brazier is placed. Everyone sits round it to get warm. They get up late, usually not before nine, a good breakfast is served at one, of from five to eight dishes; dinner at seven in the evening, and bed not till one or two in the

morning. However, everyone is at liberty to please himself. The sitting-room is all sofa, the floor is strewn with rugs, and round the room, close to the wall, runs a deep divan, on which twenty men often sit or recline. Some smoke, others sleep, others again play dominoes, écarté or whist ; but for the most part they do nothing and say little. If one is intimate in the house, the ladies will appear, and very pretty they are.

Nothing can be more delightful than the ride by the shore. On the edge of the Bosphorus stands an ancient castle, built by the Turks before the taking of Constantinople. The high white walls with towers and pinnacles twist about so strangely up and down the steep cliffs, that the legend really seems possible which says that Sultan Mahmoud had them planned to form the letters of his name. Shafts of columns, bits of frieze and beautiful carving stick out of the walls of the gigantic towers, which they are built into, as well as grave-stones, bricks, and blocks of stone. Five centuries have hardly effaced any of these footprints, set by Islam on European soil when it first crossed over from Asia. From hence it made its way as far as

the Tyrol and Germany, and its followers very nearly succeeded in turning St. Stephen's church in Vienna into a mosque, as they had turned St. Sophia's, where the cross had been adored more than a thousand years.

This old castle is generally the end of my ride. The Bosphorus rushes past it like a great raging river, and hundreds of dolphins leap along, splash- ing and snorting on the surface. No one is allowed to catch these creatures, which probably feed on the delicious flounders, palamides and gold carp, like the whole population of the capital. The rocky cliffs by the water's edge are overgrown with evergreen cypress, but the shores are edged with an unbroken line of pretty wooden summer resi- dences.

I cross to Pera in a caïque, or ride round in about an hour. The day after to-morrow, being Shrove Tuesday, there is to be a masquerade at the Russian Ambassador's. I have ordered a Slavonian cos- tume from Smyrna, but unluckily it has not yet arrived. I shall have to go disguised as an European after all.

Adieu for to-day, dear mother ; in a fortnight

or three weeks I can give you further information. • Your ever loving son,

HELMUTH.

Sultan-Hissar, March 27th, 1836.

The Pasha of the Dardanelles, to whom I was recommended, has given up to me a pretty little house on the shore, in which I have been living nearly a fortnight. I have a splendid view from my terrace over the Straits, where the great merchant ships, with flags of every nation, are incessantly passing to and fro. Yesterday a fresh southerly breeze brought up a hundred and fifty vessels in half an hour. The Dardanelles is no wider here than a large river, than the Rhine, say, at Cologne, and the ancient castles on the shores give it a quite distinctive appearance. The European shore rises steep and rocky opposite, and the warm evenings and moonlight nights are delicious here. The waves splash under my windows, and toss wildly when the south wind is strong.

I took advantage of the first possible day to make an excursion to the Troad. My little caravan consisted of two Surujee, two armed Kavasses, an

interpreter from the Embassy, and myself. When I say that we explored the ruins of Abydos, Dardanus, and Rhoetum, it only means that we saw a few heaps of stones. But even the names here are interesting. Ida was still covered with deep snow, and Scamander—or the Simois—was as full in flood as on the day when so many slain Trojans were cast into its waters. Just beyond the hill-spur of Sigeum are the tombs of Ajax, Achilles and Patroclus; and a little farther on we came to a flat-topped mound on which, it is said, the proud towers of Pergamon stood of yore. I am sorry that I have never read the Iliad since I was at Hohenfelde.

The country is no more than a wide stretch of desert; very rarely does one come across a squalid village of roofless houses. But there is so much that is new to the foreigner: fields of cotton-trees, herds of camels on the pastures, and above all the view of the islands of the Archipelago. These are made beautiful by the immensely high mountains which crown them. Nearest lay Tenedos, behind which Ulysses concealed the fleet of the Achaians; then Samos, Mytilene, and Imbros, on whose

summits the snow lies even in summer. Towards evening we reached a Turkish hamlet; the Aga came out to greet us with the usual words: "May your evening be happy, Sir; is your humour good?" and he showed us to a house; the horses, which had come eight miles [about 37 English miles], were led to a stable, and rugs spread for us before the fire. Soon a servant appeared with an enormous wooden tray on his turban, on which supper was served in tin dishes. It consisted as usual of pillaw, mutton, olives, honey and sherbet. Knives and forks there were none, but bowls of water there were, handed round before and after eating.

That there should be no lack of excitement on this day, Nature provided a little earthquake in three shocks. The first was the strongest; everyone rushed out of doors; this was at five in the afternoon, but I was in the open, and on horseback, so I felt nothing of it. The second shock, however, was at ten o'clock at night; and this again I did not feel, because I was in my first sleep and very tired. But at three in the morning I was roused by being rolled over as I lay on my

side on a mat, and all the doors and shutters slammed—there were no glazed windows.

Next morning I visited the ruins of Troas-Alexandra, which was built by Antigonos in the time of Alexander the Great. They are of incredible extent; I rode for above a quarter of a mile [about  $1\frac{7}{10}$  English mile] along a foundation wall of gigantic blocks of stone which may perhaps have carried the city wall. At last we came to a beautiful ruin in the finest style. This was the remains of the famous palace of a hundred gates. Those arches and masses of stone, laid together without mortar, may stand another three thousand years.

There is not a place in the immediate neighbourhood which I have not been to.

Pera, April 6th 1836.

I cannot possibly add anything more to-day but that I have returned from my excursion safe and sound, and to my great delight found a letter awaiting me from my father, and one from you, dear mother. The answer shall follow this in about a week, but I will try how far I can get

on before this post goes. Thank God you all keep<sup>o</sup> so well; thank Lena for her letter, which gave me much pleasure. I shall still have to dance the rope for some time yet before I set foot on firm ground. I have received letters from my chief in Berlin, desiring me to decide whether I will accept, under very favourable conditions, a post here for some length of time, a few years perhaps. The Porte has asked the King to spare him a few Prussian officers. I replied that it was not a thing I so particularly desired that I should ever ask for it; but that if his Excellency regarded me as especially fitted by my residence here, to be of essential use to my fellow-officers, I would certainly do my utmost to earn his approbation in this position. In short, I declined rather than pressed it, but the decision lies in my chief's hands, and that is always best. You will know from Eduard, before I do, what is settled.

Adieu for to-day, dear mother; if you saw the long letters I have already written to-day, you would, I am sure, excuse me from any more writing. Adieu, with best love to you all,

HELMUTH.



I have "Lamartine's Travels" with me, and they interest me greatly. I hope to read them again with you some day. The olive-spray is from the grave of Patroclus.

Constantinople, April 28th, 1836.

DEAR MOTHER,

I have nothing new to tell you, but I cannot but thank you for your dear letter of February 20th, which gave me great joy. After such a long interval it is the greatest comfort to learn from you and from my father that you are all well.

It is not yet decided whether my stay here will be considerably prolonged, or whether I may start off suddenly within a month. My General's orders cannot reach me yet for three weeks or a month. It is, however, probable, that I am fated to remain at Constantinople for some time to come, since I know the country, and the Seraskier has shown special confidence in me. A residence here is in many ways extremely interesting, and will no doubt be advantageous from a pecuniary point of view; and yet, when one has been here some

little time, and the charm of novelty has vanished, one longs ardently for Europe. The company of ten of my fellow-officers, whose arrival is already expected, will, of course, make things much pleasanter.

I am still living in the *hôtel* of the Prussian Embassy at Pera. Life is most monotonous. I get up none too early, remembering that there are twenty-four hours in the day. Till breakfast at midday I have work to do, and that is lucky; afterwards I commonly take a walk with the younger men about the Embassy. We loiter into one of the numberless cafés, sit down on low cane stools, smoke chibougnés or hubble-bubble pipes, look at the vessels passing through the Bosphorus and the dolphins which play about them in hundreds. The circulation of ideas is extremely limited; everyone knows beforehand all that his neighbour can know, so when we have told each other whether the wind is from the north or south, or whether Olympus is visible or no, we loiter home again, having accurately ascertained whether it will rain or be fine on the morrow. This is the land of lazy ease, a whole nation in

slippers. Towards evening I ride out to the Valley of Sweet Waters; we dine at seven, and what we do for the rest of the evening I really do not know.

The festivities in honour of the wedding of Princess Sonnemond (Sun-moon), or Mihrimah, begin this evening with fireworks on the Bosphorus. There was a little display about four weeks ago inside the factory, by which 180 men were blown to the winds; but it was Kismet—their fate. I hope, dear mother, that a letter from you is on the way, containing good news of you all. I close for to-day, begging you always to remember with affection your truly loving son

HELMUTH.

Buyukdéré, July 26th, 1836.

DEAR MOTHER,

Two words to-day, to announce my return from the Dardanelles, where I spent a fortnight. As I must immediately ride out to Pera, and have spent this day, from morning till night, in drawing, it is impossible to write you a real letter. To-day I give in my work, and by next mail I shall have

rather more leisure. During my absence at D. I have suffered a good deal from the heat, and yet more from flies, bugs, fleas, and the like; the sea bath, which lay under my windows, was my only salvation. On the return passage, the Turkish steam packet stuck hard and fast just outside the harbour; the Pasha went off in a caique to the Grand Seignior, and at once sent one out to carry me to land. Meanwhile we toiled all night trying to get afloat, as we were anxious to help the poor English captain, and the Turks had no idea what to do. All our efforts were in vain, for we had run hard aground, luckily only on sand. By morning a second steamer belonging to the Government, and a great number of men came to our assistance—all in vain. It was not till all the coal and ballast had been taken off, and the water let out of the boilers that we got afloat, towed off by the other vessel.

Life is very pleasant here in Buyukdéré; the latest news is that the plague has broken out in the Sultan's Seraglio, so that the good man has had to fly. It is a good thing, perhaps, and may lead to stricter measures. Here there is no sickness.

As seven weeks have passed since I wrote on June 8th, announcing my longer stay here, I confidently hope to get news of you by next mail. The post communication is so punctual that I can always count on a reply from Berlin in forty-two days, and from Holstein in fifty-two.

As concerns myself, I shall in any case be here for three months, but I hope to go home late in the autumn, and shall go to see you at Schleswig, if only for a few days.

Adieu, dear mother, with much love your

HELMUTH.

Buyukdéré, October 10th, 1836.

DEAR MOTHER,

I cannot possibly allow this mail to go out without writing to you, particularly as your dear letter of August 17th has been in my hands these three weeks. Thank God it contains good news of you all, and that you yourself are satisfied with your health this summer.

It is not yet decided whether some of our Prussian officers are to come here or no. But they may arrive any day, for they can travel

almost as quickly as the answers to our letters. As soon as they arrive I shall apply to be recalled, and can have my orders to that effect in from six to eight weeks. If they do not come after all, I may get away all the sooner; at any rate, I hope to be on my way by the New Year.

At this moment I am very busy with some work which at the same time gives me much pleasure: a survey of the ground on both sides of the Bosphorus. There are many hills to climb, but the trouble is repaid by the most beautiful prospects. We are having lovely autumn weather, and the moist sea air keeps the trees and plants green, though we have had no rain for four months. I rise betimes, and at once let myself drop into the sea—I have taken the opportunity of having about a hundred sea-baths—then I drink my coffee and go to my day's work, either in a sailing boat or a swift row-boat, or, inland, on horseback. Work lasts from nine to ten hours; in the evening I find a capital dinner ready. I have a general pass in Turkish allowing me to inspect every fort and battery; I also have a kavass, a tshaus, a corporal, and as many soldiers as I

choose, to escort me and carry my instruments. Since the 1st of the month I have gone over a tract of half a mile in length, by three quarters in breadth [more than two by three English miles], and I intend taking up my quarters for a week or a fortnight in the *Fanar* or lighthouse at the entrance of the Black Sea, so as not to lose so much time in going to and fro.

I have collected nuts and seeds for you wherever I have been ; dates from Smyrna, roses from Olympus, and tamarinds from this place. I hope all may thrive under your lucky hand.

Adieu for to-day, dear mother ; I hope soon to have news of you. Till our next happy meeting, with faithful love your

HELMUTH.

Buyukdéré, near Constantinople.

November 10th, 1836.

DEAR MOTHER,

I cannot possibly leave your welcome letter of October 5th any longer unanswered, for I have had it now a fortnight already. But the post has been delayed by snow in the Balkans, and only

came in last night, bringing me orders to send in two long reports which must go off to-day; so that I have only time to tell you that I am well and hearty, and sincerely hope soon again to have as good news of you as your last letter brought me.

Again I can tell you nothing definite about my stay here, but a crisis is at hand, which must result in a decision.

We are having a really wonderful late autumn. It is as warm as in summer, and all the meadows are green again. Quantities of roses are out in the gardens, and we sit out of doors till late in the evening. From my window I have a splendid view of the Bosphorus, and at night it is a beautiful scene, when numbers of fishing-boats shoot about with large fires blazing, to attract and catch the palamides.

With affectionate good wishes yours,

HELMUTH.

Buyukdéré, January 10th, 1837.

DEAR MOTHER,

This very day, when the mail goes out and we are expecting the mail in every hour, I am obliged



to go into the city because the Pasha has just sent for me. I hope certainly to get a letter to-day from my chief, and flatter myself with the hope of news from you. At present I cannot write more than that I am safe and sound, and do not yet know whether I shall be recalled or left here. I would finish this letter next week, for it really contains no news; but as I have written to you regularly once a fortnight for several months, and as the papers are making such an outcry about the plague, I am afraid lest you should be anxious if I delay longer than usual.

We are having a beautiful winter, from 1 to 2 degrees of frost with unbroken fine weather, a blue sky and sunshine. This is advantageous to health, and I am happy to be able to tell you that the pestilence is greatly diminishing; in some places the number of sick has fallen to half; in others there are none.

I enclose you a sketch of my room, made, not too skilfully, by an artist here, and not improved by fumigation round the edges; however, it will give you some idea of my pleasant lodging.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup> This drawing (see frontispiece) has happily been preserved. The damage done by piercing the letter for fumigation against

Good-bye for to-day, dear mother. I will soon write at greater length. I only hope this may find you well, and well armed against your cruel winter. As this letter will reach you not long before your birthday, I heartily wish you joy. God preserve you, dear mother, and you know how truly I mean it. I hope soon to have a letter from you, I have had no news for a long time. All letters come punctually to hand, and the post is as regular as between Berlin and Potsdam. Much love to all our people. Always love your

HELMUTH.

Pera, February 6th, 1837.

DEAR MOTHER,

I must confess that I can no longer remember whether your birthday is on the 2nd, 3rd, or 4th of the month. So, to make sure, I thought of you on each of those days, and prayed Heaven to preserve you for many a year in as much health and happiness as possible. But I beg you will let me know the exact date in your next letter.

the plague has been touched out in the reproduction, and the reader sees the drawing in its original state.

You will have learnt from my letter of the 24th of last month <sup>a</sup> all about the audience granted me by the Sultan, and its consequences. I had a letter not long since from my Chief, by which I am commanded by the King's Majesty to remain for the present where I am. This is certainly not exactly what I wished; however, it has two good aspects: in the first place it shows that I give satisfaction at Berlin; and it is highly advantageous to my pocket.

I have been settled here in Pera for a fortnight, because the Grand Seignior has ordered me to make a plan of Constantinople. Winter had kept away, we could walk out of an evening on the terrace in front of my house without an overcoat, and work was going on famously. Suddenly, four days since, the wind went round to the north, and we are in mid-winter. The branches of the old cypresses before my window are bent to the ground with the weight of snow. These cranky old houses rock in the wind as though they

<sup>a</sup> This letter is lost. Compare "Briefe über Zustände und Begebenheiten in der Türkei" (Letters on affairs and events in Turkey), p. 107 et seq.

must inevitably be blown down, but that Kismet ordains that they shall be burnt down. I look with dismay at the minarets on the Sulimanieh opposite; they are as dry as touchwood, and of a giddy height, and the muezzin cries from them through snow and storm that Allah is great; it seems almost impossible that these erections, 100 feet high and only eight feet thick, should remain standing. But they have stood 400 years, and must have seen many another storm. This change of scene is by no means agreeable to me, for I only needed another week to finish my map. At the same time this burst of winter is a great blessing, as it will probably put an end to the plague for this year.

I never could imagine before, why Turks are always represented in furs, or why in the latitude of 40° a fur coat should be an important article of clothing. Now I know better. You should see me here, sitting between a stove and a mangal,<sup>7</sup> and yet huddled in a large quilted counterpane. The brazier is glowing, the stove does its best, but do what they will, the temperature of the room

<sup>7</sup> A brazier.

cannot be got above 6.50 degrees of *warmth* (43 Fahr.)—a misnomer indeed—for the snow drifts in on the wind, even on to my writing-table. The houses are built of match-wood, and the invention of putty for window-panes has not yet reached the States of the Sublime Porte. Not a door shuts, and through the seams between the boards, which are a finger's width apart, there comes a current of cold wind which makes the papers dance on the flooring.

How glad I should be to sit for an hour with you on the sofa in your warm room, while Lena brought in the great, cold joint, and the tall ale glasses—I should have plenty to tell you.

The map I have made of this neighbourhood has already cost me 100 Thalers, but it will in the future be one of the most interesting results of my residence in Turkey. It includes at present the whole Bosphorus from the entrance to the Black Sea, for five miles [nearly 23 English miles] down towards the Sea of Marmora, and inland for from one to one and a half miles [about four to seven English miles] on each side. It includes Buyuk-déré, where the Ambassadors live, Therapia,

where Medea culled her magic herbs, the Cyanæa circumnavigated by the Argonauts, Hissar fortified by the Turkish Sultans, Constantinople, with the walls built by the Greek Emperors, and the Seraglio, occupying the site of ancient Byzantium; Pera and Galata founded by the Genoese, Kadikoi, the ancient Chalcedon, the plain of Daoud Pasha where the Janissaries met, and where they were given the Sandshaki Shereef, or the standard of the Prophet, when they were setting forth to conquer Christendom, the aqueducts of Valens and of Sulicman, the last spurs of the Balkans, and the first of the mountains of Bithynia.

Now, dear mother, I must close, begging you to give my love to all the brothers and sisters. Take care of yourself against the cold, keep well and think lovingly of your

HELMUTH.



II.

Count von Moltke's Letters

*TO HIS BROTHER ADOLF.*

(1839—1871.)







ADOLF VON MOLTKE.

ADOLF VON MOLTKE, the Field-Marshal's third brother, born on April 8th, 1804, was in his youth a delicate lad with small features, who grew up under his mother's specially loving care and guidance. His father took less pride in the boy, who was inferior to his elder brothers in physical strength, and only did justice to his remarkable intellectual gifts in later years. Though throughout his life Adolf had to contend ~~with~~ feeble health, he succeeded by his iron determination and remarkable talents in attaining a high position in his small native State, which he held for many years.

After studying at the Universities of Kiel and Heidelberg, and passing his examinations brilliantly, he entered on the career of a lawyer,

and served, in very critical times, as Councillor to the Chief Court of Justice of Holstein, and in the Chancery Office of Schleswig-Holstein-Lauenburg.

In 1848 the confidence of his fellow-countrymen called him to take part in the government of the united Duchies, as constituted after the armistice of Malmoe. He subsequently filled the post of Administrator to the province of Rantzau, and after the Prussian annexation, he was acting-*Landrath* for the district of Pinneberg. In all these appointments he did very good work, and did his country various and excellent service. He is remembered there as a clear-sighted and honourable man who enjoyed the esteem and respect of all. That he was able to work on till the end, he owed largely to the faithful care of his wife, under whose admirable nursing he recovered from repeated attacks of illness which brought him to the verge of the grave. Frau Auguste von Moltke, now living at Creisau, was the daughter of General von Krohn, who distinguished himself as War-Minister in Schleswig-Holstein from 1848 to 1850.

Adolf von Moltke's sufferings increased greatly towards the end of his life. They often compelled him to make a long stay in the south, and it was his elder brother Helmuth who, as usual, assisted him with generous sympathy and affection. Thus, after a residence in Algiers, during the winter of

1866-67, he was enabled to take a leading part, with renewed energy, in the difficult task of governing the Duchies in their new relations to Prussia. But, by the Field-Marshal's advice, he decided, early in 1870, to retire from the service of the State, and to settle at Creisau, which his brother had then lately acquired. The brothers were bound by a peculiarly close and affectionate tie of friendship, for they met in a common effort to attain the highest and best; and while Helmuth delighted in Adolf's never-failing humour and versatility, and derived advantage from his legal knowledge, he was always ready to advise and help his younger brother.

It had long been a cherished dream with both to live together on an estate, however small, and gather the family about them. The elder had now gained this hoped-for end, by his brilliant services and the favour of his sovereign; but their desire of living together was not long to be gratified.

In July, 1870, the Field-Marshal was called out to the greatest task of his life; Adolf was again compelled to seek a milder climate, but he could still rejoice in the victorious progress of the German armies, to which he had given two sons, and in his brother's glorious successes. But before the hour of reunion had struck, he had closed his eyes in peace, at Lugano, on April 7th, 1871.

A notice of him published in the *Hamburger Nachrichten*, said: "The whole career of this highly distinguished man may be described as having been animated by unselfish and truly Christian love, and a determination, crowned by brilliant success, to devote his best efforts to the welfare of the State and of the people."

His remains were buried by the side of three of his family who had preceded him to the grave, in the churchyard of Barnstedt, near Rantzau. Among the six survivors who stood by his grave was his brother, the famous Field-Marshal, in simple dignity and deep regret.

"He might die happy, for he knew that you, his children, would be cared for," were his words as he turned away from the little mound, and he faithfully kept his word.

## COUNT VON MOLTKE'S LETTERS TO HIS BROTHER ADOLF.

Vienna, November 23rd, 1839.

DEAR ADOLF,

I write to you but briefly to-day, dear Adolf, partly because I cannot and must not write much, partly because I now am in hope of seeing you ere long, and reserve a great deal to tell you by word of mouth. The sudden change from a Syrian summer to the late autumn in Germany, the very unhealthy sojourn in quarantine at Orsova, and the results too, no doubt, of great fatigue, brought on a severe attack of low fever. I had to remain three weeks at Pesth, and could hardly drag myself to Vienna, where I had to begin a course of radical treatment. Now I can get up, and out a little, and eat like a wolf; but I must

remain here till the middle of December at least, before I am convalescent. At the end of March I shall probably be appointed to an Army-corps, and then shall get no further leave. So I had to go this winter, and another reason for it was that I must positively be in Berlin by about the 18th January, and at the end of March.

HELMUTH.

Berlin, March 31st, 1840.

DEAR ADOLF,

The 30th of March only brought promotion in the General Staff; nothing is altered in my position, and I am now trying to make myself a little at home. I have taken very pleasant lodgings on the Leipziger Platz, close to the Potsdam Gate. This place is no longer the wilderness you saw it, but a Bowling-green<sup>1</sup> surrounded by railings, with flowering shrubs; and the immediate proximity of the Thiergarten is a decided advantage, especially as I have horses. So I can repeat my invitation to you. You will have a room to yourself, where you can work or be idle undis-

<sup>1</sup> *Sic.* Presumably a grass plot.

turbed, and you will find all kinds of mineral waters as good as at the springs. Consider of it, and remember me affectionately.

HELMUTH.

My warmest greetings to your wife.

Berlin, April 24th, 1840.

DEAR ADOLF,

I received your letter of the 13th with great pleasure, giving us the hope of seeing you in Berlin. I have been promoted, by the King's Order in Council, to the General Staff of the IVth Army. As this is under the command of H.R.H. Prince Carl of Prussia, I remain in Berlin all the same, draw slightly better pay, and, among other advantages, have a pass into the Court box at the theatre.

I shall probably have to make a tour of inspection of the Landwehr with my illustrious chief, from the 1st till the 10th of June. So I should be very glad if you could make your visit earlier or later than that time. My father also proposes to come to stay with me, and if your visits should coincide, it would perhaps be best that my father



should go to the Hôtel de Prusse in the Leipziger Strasse, and you lodge here with me.

HELMUTH.

Brunswick, August 31st, 1841.

DEAR AUGUSTA,<sup>2</sup>

You cannot think how much pleasure your kind letter afforded me, and the lovely piece of work which you sent to me at Hamburg. The book should properly contain the record of some very remarkable journey, described in an interesting way ; for it would be impossible to write anything commonplace on its pages. I had just been wishing for a book with a page for every day of the year ; but this is almost too good, and I cannot yet make up my mind to take it into use. How, and through whom, this lovely piece of work came into my hands I have no idea. I stayed but one night at Streit's Hotel, and the parcel was delivered to me there that evening. You possibly have a sprite or fairy at your command, who executes your commissions with such punctuality, and who knew beforehand

<sup>2</sup> Adolf von Moltke's wife.

that I should stop at Streit's, and at no other hotel.

If anything was lacking to your kind letter it was the date—which must not be too strictly insisted on from a lady—to enable me to judge how long Adolf had been taking the waters when he was satisfied with the results. But since he had already received my letter from Heligoland when he wrote, he must have gone through half the course by that time. I only hope that he may get through the sea-bathing with equal success. In Heligoland he must be careful to get lodgings in the Unterland, as they call it, to avoid trying his chest any more by perpetual climbing up steps.

I am wandering in and round the Harz mountains, where the good folks have made so many roads that I cannot come to an end of my survey. The tempting convenience of a railroad brought me over to Brunswick; this evening I return to Harzburg, and by Ilsenburg and Wernigerode to the Ballenstedt Empire, where I shall no doubt meet some of your acquaintance.

You do not mention little Lotte. If she still

remembers "Uncle Mond," give her my love. Once more many, many thanks, dear Augusta, for your kind thought. Think always affectionately of your faithful brother-in-law and friend,

HELMUTH MOLTKE.

Rome, March 29th, 1846.

DEAR ADOLF,

I hope the other brothers and sisters have already sent you news of our<sup>3</sup> arrival here, and of our doings generally.

From a letter which I received yesterday from W. Brockdorff, we learn with regret that the inevitable political squabbles have reacted disadvantageously on your private position in Copenhagen. He thinks you will take long leave of absence. For any man who lives not on his dividends but on his earnings, health and long life are the chief capital, so I can honestly advise you not to shrink from some small outlay to establish your health and refresh your mind. I should feel inclined to

<sup>3</sup> The Field-Marshal had married, on May 24th 1840, Fräulein Marie Burt; he was now in Rome as Adjutant to Prince Henry of Prussia, who lived there.

beg you to ask at least six months' leave and to complete the cure by a visit here. At Kissingen you are already exactly half way to Rome from Copenhagen. Now Ludwig can tell you that you can get from Rome to Hamburg very comfortably for 150 thalers, or *vice versa*, and he, travelling with Russian princes and English gentlemen, certainly did not do it cheaply. So if, to please us, you will but extend your journey so far beyond your first destination, I can place 300 thalers, Prussian currency, at your service for that purpose. We are so situated here that a very perceptible surplus remains after paying all expenses, and there could be none which would afford us greater pleasure than seeing you here for a few months. So the cost need not be a serious difficulty.

With regard to the time of year, I can only advise you to set out as late as possible, not before the beginning of August. Then, if you allow a week for the journey, and six weeks for the cure at Kissingen, you will have ended it by the last days of September, when it already begins to get cool. I should advise your going to Heidelberg ;

from thence you have the railway, and can travel quickly, pleasantly, and cheaply to Basle and the Swiss frontier. Baden and Freiburg are good places to stop at. At the end of September you have a better chance of a clear atmosphere among the Swiss mountains than even in the middle of the summer. According to your improvement in strength after the course of baths, you might make a walking tour through the Bernese Oberland, and across by Lago Maggiore to Milan; or go by coach to Genoa, by Berne and Geneva. At Genoa go to the Hôtel d'Italie, kept by Germans, who will make a bargain for you with a vetturino to carry you to Pisa in a Calescino or open carriage. The vetturino takes entire charge of you; he provides quarters for the night, breakfast, dinner, and supper, so that you need not speak a word. I advise you to travel by this route, although you could come by steamer, because the drive along the Riviera di Levante is the most beautiful thing you will see in Italy. From Pisa by train to Leghorn; packet to Civita Vecchia, and diligence to Rome. All further details I reserve till a future communication. As

soon as you have got down the southern slope of the Alps you will suffer from the heat, even in the beginning of October. But here October is the most delightful month. The first rainfall cools the air, malaria disappears, and fresh verdure decks the Campagna. You may reckon on uninterruptedly fine weather in October and November. If you return in December, *viâ* Ancona and Venice, you will plunge suddenly from Trieste into the German winter, but then you have a direct and almost unbroken railway journey to Copenhagen.

Five years ago I made the journey from Berlin to Naples, spent four weeks at Baden, and was four months on the road. The cost of that journey was 100 Louis d'or (£80), which gives you an approximate idea of things. If you could to some extent break up your household in Copenhagen, and leave your wife and children for so long with her parents, the whole expedition would cost you little, and do you, it is to be hoped, great good. For a man who has had a classical education and is thoroughly acquainted with Roman Institutions, Rome is still one of the most interesting places in the world ; and our temporary residence here gives

you the opportunity of enjoying in comfort all that is worth seeing. So take my proposal into consideration, and make us happy by deciding to accept it as soon as possible.

April 4th.

This letter has been kept back longer than it should have been, so it will not reach you for your birthday on the 8th. I add, nevertheless, the heartiest good wishes from both Marie and myself, and wish you for a birthday present a snug appointment before long in Holstein, far from Dano-Germanic broils, a fine official residence with a garden, and a handsome salary.

To-morrow we enter on the *Settimana Santa*, (Holy Week) when there is some fresh ceremonial every day, beginning to-morrow, Palm Sunday, at St. Peter's. On Maunday Thursday the Pope bestows a universal blessing, *urbi et orbi*, from the Loggia; on Sunday the dome of Saint Peter's is illuminated, and on Monday there are fireworks from Sant' Angelo. Then the foreigners disperse, Rome is Roman once more, prices go down, and we shall see if we can get a suitable residence, for

hitherto we have been living in three rooms which cost ninety thalers a month—on the Corso, it is true, where all the turmoil of the Carnival goes on under our windows. I am at an end of my paper. My best remembrances to Augusta. Yours,

HELMUTH.

Coblentz, October 30th, 1847.

DEAR ADOLF,

I found your letter of the 4th of this month on my return from a short tour on duty through the Eifel and to Trier. I value a letter from you all the more because I know that you have to take the time for private correspondence from your hours of recreation in the family circle. This letter, also, contains none but good and pleasant news of you and yours. So far, indeed, our paths in life have led us apart, for of all your family I only know your dear wife, since your beautiful eldest child was snatched from you and from us all. If I had remained at Berlin, one of my first excursions would certainly have been to Copenhagen. Even as it is I do not give up all hope of taking Marie there some day.



I count positively on your visit to us next year, and only beg you to take long enough leave, so that your stay here may not be too strictly limited. You must in any case make an excursion from hence to the Moselle, which, in my opinion, is superior even to the Rhine in beauty. And it will interest you, I am sure, to trace the steps of the greatest nation in history, at Trier. No such important and well-preserved monuments of the Roman period exist anywhere out of Italy as there. We might perhaps make a trip together to Paris or into Switzerland, which Marie has never yet seen. A pair of good horses and a comfortable carriage will take you about the pretty environs of Coblenz, and you shall never hear the little sea-washed country mentioned. You will find our house very comfortable, and arranged for visitors. We are not indeed so happy as to have any children; they are a great blessing, though so often linked with sorrow. I do not know that I used to wish for any other gift of Fortune.

My position in the service is a pleasant one, and promises further advancement. In consequence of my early connection with Prince Henry of Prussia,

I have, till my pay is raised to the same amount, a private allowance of 800 thalers ; so that I already draw the pay of a colonel in command of a regiment, until I am made Chief of the General Staff of an Army Corps, which must come in the course of a few years, but will involve a change of station. I do not want to rise any higher, and shall then retire. At least, that is my intention, unless the proverb comes true for both of us, that the jug that goes often to the well breaks at last. My little wife is my greatest joy. In five years I have rarely seen her sad, and never cross. She has no vagaries and allows of none in other people. But no one should do her a real wrong, for with the best will in the world she could not forgive it ; with all her light-heartedness she has a decided, strong and deep nature, which she would assert under all adverse circumstances. God preserve her from such. But I know what I possess in her.

Yours,

HELMUTH.

Coblentz, January 13th, 1848.

DEAR ADOLF,

. . . As regards the troubles in Holstein, we regard them here from a more German point of view no doubt. Considering the ultra anti-German policy to which Denmark has adhered for the last fifty years, and the endless obstructions by which it has hampered German efforts towards development, whether as to the Sound-dues or the construction of railways, we here can only desire a closer union of the Duchies with the common Fatherland. Nor can there be a more fortunate position than that of a small German nation, with which Prussia and Austria share all its political and military burdens, as you yourself must have observed in Lauenburg. The Sovereign Duchy of Holstein might perfectly subsist without Denmark, but not the kingdom without the Duchy. But for this very reason it seems indispensably necessary to come to an understanding, and this, amid such opposing passions, can hardly be arrived at. All these political dinners, addresses, meetings and ovations lead to no useful end. But, as it seems to me, what Mephisto says, 'It is a law of spirits, that where

they get in they must get out again,' has its application in this matter of the hereditary rights. It was not the Germans who abrogated the Salic law. Positive rights are on their side; they are fighting for their hereditary dynasty, for legitimate succession, for all which princes so gladly listen to. If the personal union must be maintained, no alternative remains but to retrace the false step taken by one party, and annul the *lex regia*. Whether it is the Prince of Hesse or the Prince of Augustenburg who occupies the Danish throne, is a secondary consideration when the existence of the Danish monarchy is at stake. So I cannot give up my conviction that a closer alliance with Germany is Denmark's best policy.

It is no doubt most unpleasant to stand between the Government and the people under such friction, and greatly to be wished that the present king may reign long enough to calm down excited spirits so far as to effect a union. If his successor should act with less prudence but more decision, matters might be still worse. How glad I should be to exchange views with you on all these things by word of mouth! Yours,

HELMUTH.

Berlin, July 9th, 1848.

DEAR ADOLF,

The rumour of peace with Denmark is gaining ground, and the necessity for some conclusion is self-evident. What would happen to Holstein if war, whether it came from the East or West, called on Prussia to fight for her own existence and that of Germany? Would she then be in a position to spare a corps of 15,000 of her best troops for what would then be a subordinate end? But alas! I fear that the conditions of this peace will hardly answer to the magnitude of the sacrifice. United Germany has in this matter again left us more or less in the lurch. Prussian commerce and the Military budget have to bear the cost. What would the shriekers in Frankfort say if the union with Schleswig, the abolishment of the Sound-dues, and in short all their fairest dreams were not fulfilled? The internal difficulties, the general rebellion of subordinates against orders, of those who own nothing against those who own something, will come to the surface in Holstein as soon as the new organization begins. You, on the spot, will soon be able to see whether you can

find an opening suited to your principles, in which you may effect the re-establishment of a legal position. Work in the service of the State will not be very satisfactory, and I can quite understand your repugnance to re-entering it. I too, should prefer the simplest private life. If we do not have war first, which would change the whole situation, and if we are required to swear a fresh oath to a new constitution, I too shall retire. I could not, indeed, in that case claim a pension after my thirty years' service.—My cherished idea is that by degrees we should gather together on an estate somewhere or other, where each of us should contribute in capital or working power whatever he could bring. I would rather that this possession should be on the beloved soil of Germany.

But if matters should become still worse in the home-country, so far as I am concerned I have no objection to the other hemisphere. Still, I cannot conceal from myself the fact that to realize capital at this juncture would entail a loss of perhaps fifty per cent. ; and that the ladies, who are always so conservative, would find it hard to make themselves at home among the conditions of a new

world. Their disposition binds them still more strongly than us to their native soil, and to tear them from it is a great responsibility. At any rate, however, it seems to me a fortunate thing if your present position enables you now to acquire some knowledge of farm management. The reaction of our unhappy disorders on the hitherto high prices of land cannot be long delayed, and perhaps, in a not very remote future, the moment may come when an estate may be purchased without fear of subsequent loss. Great reforms are to be effected here in official circles. The legislative and Government offices are to be reduced in numbers. The *Landräthe* (country councils) and *Oberpräsidien* are to be abolished; several provinces will be united under the management of Civil-governors, as in Belgium. Prussia has hitherto had an intelligent and honest body of officials, though costly, perhaps, and slow to move. May the new experiment turn out better than the *Gouvernement à bon marché* of our neighbours. The retrospective action of the diminished pensions is a great hardship, since the past state of finances did not require such a measure. They have not

yet ventured to give the military profession a shake, because foreign affairs look too threatening; but it will come. Exactly what is meant by "arming the people" I do not understand; I thought we had done so in the fullest sense, in our Landwehr. As I have said, without war the military profession will in the future be but a sorry one. And as I cannot but discern that I am incapable of any greater efficiency in the future than I have hitherto shown, the idea of getting out of it all grows and ripens in me.

I think I wrote to you that I have no intention of settling in Berlin; I hope in a short time to leave this unsatisfactory place. Perhaps there may be a vacancy at Magdeburg before long.

Thank God that you are all well at home. I accept with sincere pleasure the office of godfather to little Helmuth. God grant that I may be a help to him on the road over which hangs a darker cloud than ever, for not even the immediate future can be guessed at in these days. Your faithful brother

HELMUTH.



Berlin, August 3rd, 1848.

DEAR ADOLF,

I read your letter of the 30th ult. with the greatest interest. I think you have done as rightly in joining in the struggle over the social question as in keeping out of the political struggle. But will the Duchies be allowed the liberty of giving themselves, and elaborating their own constitution? If the Provisional Government should be broken up, and the Holstein troops disbanded, the constitution would have to be promulgated from Copenhagen. Such a peace would be but a wretched one, but, in the present state of Germany, how can anything better be aimed at? Never were we further from an union than now. They will not see Prussia at their head, and without Prussia nothing can be accomplished. There is to be a demonstration in favour of Prussia to-day. I hope that nothing much may come of it, for all these demonstrations prove nothing, or very little. Only a small number of persons attend them, and always the same. But popular feeling is much excited; antagonisms are strongly pronounced, and the street tumults, which were half lulled, have broken

out again. It is a pity that so much mud sticks to the tricolour flag, and that it should be offered by the hands of demagogues. I can give you no idea of our present situation ; we are in the midst of a crisis. But I think that the Frankfort people have given a severe check to the unity by means of union, which is here sincerely hoped for. At any rate, they have done harm to the Schleswig-Holstein business, for Prussia is carrying on the contest there solely in the interest of Germany, and entirely against her own.

Your own position in the Constitutional Assembly will be neither very pleasant nor very lucrative ; but I believe that, besides the negative service of taking the place of a revolutionary, you may do very positive good service. A country in the hands of a population who are almost all land-owners, and for the most part well to do, must always be a soil on which something can be built up. From some correspondence in the papers, from Kiel, I see, indeed, that our Friends of the People have a branch there.

We read in the papers to-day that Austria is to furnish a contingent to carry on the Danish war.

By the time it can come up, the Belt will be frozen over. Germany would rather that, in the event of a war with Russia, Austria should place the 94,000 men in the field, as she is pledged to do as our ally, and of which in all probability she would not be able to send out a single man.

Adieu, dear Adolf. Heartily yours,

HELMUTH.

The enclosed letter from Colonel Griesheim is somewhat violent, but shows the feeling of the army.

Magdeburg, September 9th, 1848.

DEAR ADOLF,

We have not heard from you for a long time, and I address this letter on the chance of it finding you at Kiel. I do not know whether you have a seat in the Constitutional Assembly, but I see in the paper that you are called as Vice-president of the Provisional Government.

It may be that this Government under Count Moltke is totally impossible in the present excitement. But it fills me with anxiety to think of you in what seems to be such a thoroughly

revolutionary, constitution-mongering assembly. I only hope you are not deceiving yourselves in Holstein ; I, of course, cannot know what the views of our Government may be. But it will most certainly—I mean the King will—adhere to the armistice as agreed on, whatever they may decide in Frankfort. We have reached the extreme verge of endurance. Both the Ministries, in Frankfort and Berlin, have resigned ; but I doubt whether the King will accept the resignation in Berlin. A new Ministry could only be formed from the extreme left ; it would only prolong this wretched state of affairs for a few weeks. The time is critical ; a breach is almost unavoidable—a breach with the revolution in Prussia, and with Germany so far as Frankfort is its representative. I believe that the King will dissolve the Chambers, and that at Berlin we shall begin again just where we unfortunately left off on the 19th of March. The people must surely be convinced by this time that there is no salvation to be looked for from the party in the *Singakademie*. Strong measures are being taken. The discontent in the army is evidently fanned by the Republicans.

They think they will win ; very good ; we think that we shall. But that it should be supposed in Holstein, that general war will be made for the sake of its petty interests, when matters are so serious all over Europe, is really too much ! And what is there that is so atrocious in the armistice ? If the laws of the Provisional Government are annulled, so are those of the Danish Government, and consequently the annexation of Schleswig too. However, be that as it may, the Prussian army will undoubtedly go back there. You will have no lack of volunteers, and you will see then what you can make of them. *Le remède est pire que le mal !* It will be difficult to make the voice of reason heard above the shrieks of passion, and I should be glad if you were out of it all.

The poor Fatherland ! The better sort of the nation are silent, the scum come to the top and govern. They are eager for a reaction which no one wants or wishes for. The immediate future will show whether we can remain in this disgraceful predicament.

For the last fortnight I have been holding a new appointment, and have a great deal to do. That I

am glad of; Berlin was almost unendurable. Marie sends her love, she is well, thank God. I must conclude; and, indeed, I know not what more to write. Everything is uncertain, even the immediate future. After the 1st of next month we shall be in a very pretty house in the Domplatz, the best part of the city. When Holstein waxes too hot for you, come to us, wife, children and all; we have plenty of room. The feeling here is very good; they look with contempt on Berlin. It must all end in war; and it is some comfort to think that the first gun-shot will put an end to the part of all these praters. God forgive them for all they have brought on our poor unfortunate country. Then Prussia will either go under, or come out at the head of Germany, her proper place.

It is interesting to consider the way in which, under the Republic of Paris, they are voting for the censorship of theatres, for a Ministry of Police, the suppression of newspapers and of proclamations on the walls, and for martial law; while under the Monarchy at Berlin, the most unbridled license in every particular is not thought enough.

But enough of these cursed politics. My dear Adolf, my only object is to warn you. A man may be carried away in the midst of such agitation as surrounds you. Schleswig-Holstein has no sympathizers left among the greater number of thinking men in Prussia. Yours,

HELMUTH.

Magdeburg, September 21st, 1848.

DEAR ADOLF,

Your letter of the 16th inst. has made it very clear to me how difficult are the conditions under which you are labouring at Kiel, to rescue, in the shipwreck of the times, what may still be saved of order and cohesion. I understand that after the support given by Prussia in the first instance, her apparent sacrifice of the country at last should hardly be approved of. But what events have taken place between the beginning and the end! It was impossible to foresee in March the consequences to which the barricade victories would lead. Affairs at home grew more threatening every day. The power and daring of the democrats increased with every change of Ministers;

the newspapers were, and still are, almost exclusively in the service of that party. I need only refer to the Schweidnitz incident. The legal trial by the acting authorities, not the illegal authority of the delegates, has now proved that the military were fully justified. Who could have gathered this from the newspaper reports? And yet this incident formed the basis of Stein's motion, and Schultze's amendment,<sup>4</sup> which caused the majority to pass a unanimous vote of censure on the Army, which stands alone spotless and pure, the last and only safeguard of order. The Republic was indeed full-grown; the Assembly had become a Convention. It ruled and governed, it gave the laws and carried them out. The King was practically deposed. The Berlin Bürgerwehr (town militia)

<sup>4</sup> Stein's motion was as follows: "The Minister of War should express himself in an order to the Army, to the effect that the officers were to hold aloof from all reactionary movements, and not only to avoid every kind of conflict with the civil authorities, but to show by their readiness to approach and combine with the citizens that they sincerely desire to co-operate in earnest for the realization of constitutional legislation." Schultze's amendment added: "It should also be held a point of honour by those officers who cannot reconcile this to their political convictions, to retire from the army."



endorsed the decision of the Chamber. So much for Berlin. On the day when you wrote the rebellion broke out in Frankfort; there Jordan, Jahn, Gagern, and others have long been on the side of reaction, even Blum and his followers are no longer equal to the times.—Could any rational being believe that Prussia would allow her troops to turn back, would send the Stettin ships within hail of the Copenhagen embargo, and declare war with Sweden and Russia, all because Professor Dahlmann had refused to accept the armistice? He could not even find the men who might have undertaken the measures for carrying out his schemes. This much was certain, the rejection of the armistice meant a breach between Prussia and Germany, the complete destruction of the only thing which could reconcile us to all the evils we have suffered for the past half-year—the destruction of the unity of Germany. And for this very reason the left insisted on its rejection. It was contemptible enough, when the Assembly finally came to an opposite determination, and men like Waitz spoke for its rejection and voted for its maintenance—a wide gulf indeed between word

and deed. The Poles arrived at Frankfort on Saturday, on Sunday the street-rioting began. It was stopped by the prompt and determined interference of the garrison from Mainz. But I have no doubt that nevertheless the Republic will be proclaimed within the next few days at Baden, and in Thuringia. It will be put down there too. But what a piece of good fortune that in this conjuncture our army is not on the Schley but on the Spree. We have now 40,000 men in and round Berlin; there lies the centre of gravity of the German question. Order in Berlin is order throughout the country. A strong Prussian Government, and then German unity can be achieved by Prussia. With all this I will only add that the action of our Government in Holstein may seem hard, unjust, even perfidious, but it was required by superior and higher interests.

Power now lies at Berlin, with a full right to use it. If they fail to do so now, I am ready to set out with you for Adelaide. The next few days must bring great issues.

At the same time I wish with all my heart that your constitution-making may bring peace

and blessing to the country. The Danes will no doubt come to their senses; they will not defy Germany a second time when once Germany has settled her own internal affairs; but this will never again be done on the old lines. I could almost believe that men of your stamp and Reventlow's are the only men who could hold the balance between the pretensions of Denmark and Holstein. But if you still have no official employment before the winter, you know you will be welcome here, with your wife and children. We have a fine large house in the best part of the town, and Marie has already thought of everything to make you as comfortable as possible.

As regards my appointment here, I am Chief of the General Staff of the IVth Army-corps (Province of Saxony). I have plenty to do, for democracy is moving here too. Our neighbours of Altenburg, Reuss-Schleiz-Greiz, Meiningen and Schwarzburg take care of that. But we step in firmly with our splendid soldiery. The insurgent towns are kept in order by mobilized columns, whole troops of armed citizens and shooting-corps are disarmed, the ringleaders captured and the rebels

plainly taught that the law still has the upper hand. Here in Magdeburg the citizens are well affected. Of course there is a mob, and in these times we may expect an outbreak anywhere. But these are mere trifles ; Berlin, that is where the decision rests.

For nearly three months we have been living in the midst of cholera, first at Berlin and then here. Everyone has suffered ; it is another of the gifts of this year '48, which will long survive in our memory. But Marie is as well and cheerful as ever, thank God. It is really a wonder, with no house to attend to—for we are still living at an inn—alone almost all day, surrounded by scenes of gloom and threatening rumours, she is always equally gay and calm. When I come in, however tired and worried I may be, I find a happy face to greet me. 'God bless her for it!

Our chief diversion is riding—Marie rides the grey and I the black horse. The bay and the brown one go in harness. In a week we move into our pretty home in the Domplatz, facing due south. We rejoice to think of it. All the

furniture is in already. Farewell, dear Adolf, I must close this hasty scrawl. To our next happy meeting ere long. A thousand kind remembrances to your dear wife. Heartily yours,

HELMUTH.

Magdeburg, November 17th, 1848.

• DEAR ADOLF,

Affairs here have come to a point at which it would be interesting to commit one's thoughts to paper, just to see whether in a few days one might not pass for a prophet, or wonder at one's own blindness. If the outlook were really as bad as the newspapers say, all would now be lost. A cry of indignation—to use the favourite French expression—has gone up from town and country; there is no choice but reaction or anarchy. We are, it is certain, at a serious crisis. It has come to a refusal to pay the taxes. The next step will be a red republic. And all this with the full sanction of the press, accompanied by addresses from all parts of the kingdom, and backed up by the bayonets of the armed citizens. In the midst of the storm we are calling out the Landwehr, which

is after all neither more nor less than the people themselves. There is the whole question in a nutshell. The answer to it will be a crushing defeat for one party or the other.

These are times in which everyone must act on his own responsibility. No one need look for instructions from his superiors, and we have ordered out every one of the twelve Landwehr battalions of the province. Only yesterday some of the towns took up arms to prevent the troops marching out, and the railways have refused to convey them. The telegraphs are damaged, and the citizens are offering protection to the recruits if they will refuse to obey the call to arms. The republic has been proclaimed in Thuringia, and Dr. Stockmann gives the armed peasants regular pay. The Landwehr arsenals are threatened, some of them already in the hands of the townspeople, and the arms distributed. Good faith, discipline and order seem now only to be found in the army and amongst the officials, on whom of course the press pours out the vials of its wrath. Through all this tumult the simple words "To Arms!" will presently sound, and thousands will have to leave house and

home to fight against the very principles in favour of which they have just been petitioning, making speeches or applauding them, or perhaps even have taken up arms. It really does seem rather extraordinary.

For all this, I am more hopeful than I have been for the last six months. The state of things has been so insufferable, that one longs for it to be decided—as it must be now, one way or another. I hope to Heaven that reason and right may prevail. The Brandenburg Ministry may be an unpolitical measure, but its resolute attitude makes up for everything. This is the first time since March 18th that we have seen any show of firm determination, and it stirs the hearts of millions. And this time they really are determined—quite determined to face all consequences. There is no doubt but that Berlin will share the fate of Vienna, if there is any rebellion. And this rebellion may be called forth at any moment by the most trivial squabble. Every precaution has been taken, and here in Magdeburg, where enormous stores are collected, and the garrison reduced to two-fifths of its standing in times of peace, we are prepared for the

worst. Our splendid Saxons are stationed all the way between Worms and Berlin. We have to help all our neighbours, so that very little is left over for ourselves. But that little we have duly set in motion. Wherever our troops appear, order is at once restored; the well-intentioned come to the fore and the most noisy have vanished. The three bullets in the Prater did not strike Robert Blum alone, but many other people in Germany. However, we are few against many, and no man can answer for the issue. The next few days will be decisive for us. God grant I may soon have good news for you.

The storm at our own doors has necessarily driven the Schleswig-Holstein business into the background. Our papers give us little or no news from that quarter. I should be all the better pleased to hear from you what is going on. I met an officer this evening who had been quartered with Fritz at Apenrade, and who did full justice to him, in spite of his Danish tendencies. That pleased me very much.

I suppose you have sent for your wife and children to Schleswig. I had hoped to go to



Itzehoe at Christmas for a week or a fortnight, and we could have foregathered there from all quarters, but now nobody can see beyond the next week. Otherwise all is well with us. We have got rid of one enemy, the cholera. It was a wretchedly bad time for me, for I was constantly ill till it went over. It would be terrible to be ill just now. Marie is bright and well, and would storm a barricade at a moment's notice if it were necessary. When you give up your regency, we shall invite you down here. And now, dear Adolf, good-bye. I must make the most of my time, especially to get some sleep, as I am called up twice every night. However, we get accustomed to everything—except to our conquests.

Yours affectionately,

HELMUTH.

Magdeburg, July 13th, 1849.

DEAR ADOLF,

The affair at Fridericia is a most painful occurrence, apart from the misery which it must have caused to the sorely stricken families. From a military point of view, it has done little or

nothing to alter the situation. The Danes themselves can scarcely think that this victory will enable them to hold the open field outside their fortifications, even for a week. They would most assuredly be utterly beaten by double their numbers of an enemy whose irritation will brook no further delays. If the Schleswig-Holstein troops have suffered severely, the loss on the Danish side has been as great, and they have no doubt retreated to-day into the fortress and on Fühnen.

It is difficult to be quite fair to the vanquished. From my own absolutely impartial point of view, I think one can only admit that the management of the allied troops in Jutland was certainly deplorably bad, and that General Rye might have been defeated weeks ago. How far this delay may have been caused by high political considerations, is not for me to decide; but assuredly no one cursed this policy more heartily than Prittwitz, Hirschfeld, and their troops. That these generals should have purposely withheld their assistance from Bonin, no one can seriously believe. Prittwitz was at four days' march from Fridericia, and was

bitterly enough reproached for not being still further off, up in Jutland. Whether Bonin could have been warned sooner, before Rye's embarkation, I do not know. It was in all the papers, and could hardly have led him to adopt other precautions than those he had already taken—to surround the fortress closely, and to keep a vigilant look out.

The Danish sortie was, strategically speaking, a well-planned operation, and tactically a brilliant passage of arms. There were 14,000 men in the trenches, and 20,000 in the open field. The Holsteiners defended themselves gallantly, but the Danes were braver still in attacking them, and they won. That they did so in spite of a no great superiority in bayonets as attacking intrenchments, and of an artillery that far surpassed theirs in number and calibre, can only be attributed to the suddenness of the attack. But it is difficult to understand how so considerable a body of men could have landed unobserved in the bright moonlight of a short summer night.

But if, from the military point of view, this action of the enemy was a brilliant success, from

every other it appears as an unpardonable act of revenge, a senseless cutting down of friend and foe, and a political mistake which is pretty sure to react upon those who committed it.

The unfortunate part of the whole thing is, that it has placed a dangerous weapon in the hands of the ill-disposed, both of those who maliciously accuse Prussia of treachery, and those who are simple enough to believe the accusation. If a truce is now concluded, it certainly will look as if the Cabinet Ministers had purposely sacrificed the Schleswig-Holstein troops, in order to make way for any conditions of peace. Our own troops will be indignant, democracy will gain fresh ground, the South German allies will, if not openly at least secretly, lend a hand to the extravagant schemes of the revolutionary party in Holstein, new volunteer corps will be formed, the credit of the Government immensely lowered, and the first trophy of the attempted union of Germany will be a humiliating failure.

Much as I have wished for a peace with Denmark, I hope that it may not be brought about just yet. The sudden departure of the Danish

Ambassador Extraordinary from Berlin, almost leads one to believe that in Copenhagen too, the democrats are going to overstep all bounds, and that they are making fresh claims, on the strength of a victory that was not really decisive. Her friends in London and St. Petersburg will find that Denmark will refuse any reasonable peace, and public opinion will insist upon a complete occupation of Jutland and a determined attack upon Fridericia (for this has been but feebly carried on hitherto). I must cling to this hope, and wish with all my heart that Denmark may not accept the offer of peace.

My best love to you and yours. Augusta is of course very much excited. I only hope we may soon have better news of poor Krohn. The children are well and blooming. These bad times pass over them and leave no trace; may they soon see better ones. Affectionately yours,

HELMUTH.

Magdeburg, August 11th, 1849.

DEAR ADOLF,

We have been expecting you daily and

hourly, but at this crisis in your own little Fatherland your time is no doubt fully occupied by serious business; at any rate, I trust you have not been hindered by illness. We leave this place to-morrow at 11.45, and I am writing by the 6 o'clock train this evening, that you may not come to-morrow to find us gone.

Things are quiet enough for the present to permit of my leaving my post for a few weeks. I have much need of rest. We have fixed upon Wangeroog for the baths, though I would rather have gone to Föhr. However, I do not care to go into Holstein while this absurd outcry about Prussian treachery lasts. I should lose my temper, if the public feeling were really such as I must suppose from individual cases, and that would spoil the cure. I should like to have your views upon the subject. It looks as if Holstein were submitting to the inevitable, but *de mauvaise grâce*, which will not mend matters. I sincerely hope that you may soon settle down peaceably into your administration of Rantzau.

Our new Cabinet leads me to hope for better things. I cannot quite believe in a war with

Austria. It would be like two rivals firing at one another in a powder magazine. Hungary will keep Austria amused for a little while yet, and in Italy peace can only be maintained by force of arms. The latest measure of the central authorities is certainly calculated to revive civil war in Germany, and the second act of the Baden drama might very easily be played in Württemberg. It seems to me that by seizing on Hohenzollern, Prussia has burned her ships behind her. She must push on the German Cause. Pray Heaven we may only keep the Brandenburg Ministry!—let us have no more weak wise fools! Good-bye, dear Adolf. To our next more agreeable meeting somewhere or other. Affectionately yours,

HELMUTH.

Magdeburg, November 12th, 1849.

DEAR ADOLF,

We were heartily glad to find from your letter that you were at last in your country home, and hope that your health may soon be strengthened and improved by congenial occu-

pation. The desperate entanglement of the country's affairs must naturally affect you in your new office, though more indirectly than in the former one, and less so than poor Ludwig, who must really be in a desperate plight.

Here order is gradually being restored. For the town corps to give up their arms is a great step towards a better state of things. I have no doubt that this will shortly be accomplished without any serious hindrance. After that, I may perhaps be able to get leave, though probably for only a very short time. It certainly is not particularly pleasant here for me, public feeling, whether justly or unjustly, being antagonistic. But any change in this respect is not to be thought of for some time to come.

What will come of the Schleswig affair God alone knows. That is the worst business of all, and all the more so that no amount of waiting will help matters; something definite must be done. On the one hand, it is highly improbable that Prussia, after her late bitter experience, will again take up the doubtful cause



of the Duchies at the risk of a European war ; on the other, it would be impossible to stand by and see their struggle with Denmark begin afresh, a struggle the result of which would be very uncertain, to say the least of it, even if Prussian officers were allowed to join. Denmark seems bent upon this single combat.

• It seems to me that the Government is playing a dangerous game. Prussia is manifestly the only ally the Duchies have. Neither Russia nor England will help them, least of all Austria, Bavaria, and the rest, who, though they are taking up their cause both in word and by writing, took care to withdraw their troops first. Democracy is about the worst staff for anyone to lean upon, and even that does not seem strong enough in Holstein to affect the attitude of the Government. However, I am quite willing to admit that the situation there is beyond my comprehension.

We have gone into our winter quarters. There is a beautiful carpet in the drawing-room, and in this splendid autumn weather the sun shines brightly in at the windows. There is no end

to the writing I have to do. I should be very glad to read a book once more, but there is no time for anything serious. My Roman map is being engraved on copper by Brosch, one of our first engravers, and the King has advanced 700 thalers for it. My General sends his kind regards. He has the goodness to go away now and then, whereby my labours are considerably abridged. My best love to Augusta and the dear children. Let us soon have news of you.

Your affectionate

HELMUTH.

Magdeburg, January 26th, 1850.

DEAR ADOLF,

We are wondering what will be the result of the royal proposition. I believe that the Government would carry it through if there could be any certainty that it would be adhered to. But that is just what no one does believe, so I suppose that it will come to a *mezzo termine*. I do not believe in a Gerlach Ministry; they would have to make up their minds to treat the dear Berliners to some powder and shot. There may

be a modification of the Manteuffel-Brandenburg Ministry, but that would certainly be a great loss, for the system could not well be altered, and they could find no better men to carry it out than those who have brought us safely so far. On the whole, our internal affairs are being put upon a firmer basis, for if the democrats are reduced to passive resistance, they must cease to exist. Action is their real element. If Austria and Prussia could come to a real understanding, the rest would be easy; but I fear that this union only involves the smaller states, and does not affect the really important question at issue between them.

Have you read the pamphlet on "A Review of the Development of Affairs in Germany during the year 1849"? (by Canitz, but the author is not mentioned). If not, let me recommend it to your notice. Yours affectionately,

HELMUTH.

Magdeburg, February 19th, 1850.

DEAR ADOLF,

Marie sends her best love, and we both hope to have good news of your wife. The abominable

weather of the last fortnight has no doubt kept you indoors. But it must improve soon, and then the country will be charming. These seasonable storms times may rage through the high beeches, but I hope they will not damage your roof.

The prospect is certainly very dark. Even though there are fewer actual preparations for war than at this season for the last two years, the whole aspect of affairs is very serious. It is therefore of the first importance, that by the establishment at last of the constitution on a firm basis, the country has undoubtedly gained confidence; more especially as no great results are to be expected from Erfurt. Austria counts for so little as a German power, that we may expect her, in the event of a real union of the States, to try to arrest her non-German interests, even if she had to do so at the point of the sword. There is nothing perhaps to prevent this but the undeniable emptiness of her coffers, and the threatening aspect of affairs in two-thirds of the Austrian dominions, in Italy, Hungary, Bohemia and Galicia.

Prussia must own that she has not a single friend in all Europe, and must depend entirely on

herself. We perhaps still have Louis Napoleon on our side, a man with merely a party at best, and not a nation at his back. In France, a bloody conflict seems inevitable, and the issue doubtful. So one does not know whether to count France as friend or foe. Prussia is detested by the democrats of all nations because she is the stronghold of order, while in the eyes of the St. Petersburg and Vienna Cabinets she is revolutionary. She is unpopular in all the family of States, who look on her as self-made and a parvenu, and the small principalities despise her for having fallen from the ranks of the old nobility. So she has no allies, no power of expansion within or without, and has no one to depend on but herself.

Whatever happens, I do not think that that worst of all enemies, democracy, has much chance of success with us. For this time we should stop short at nothing. On the other hand, it is certainly very unfortunate that the struggle in Schleswig seems on the point of breaking out again, and that a not inconsiderable portion of our forces may be involved once more in a fight which, in the absence of a fleet, can, in no conceivable

manner be brought to a satisfactory conclusion. The news that comes in of military treaties with Anhalt, Brunswick and Mecklenburg in succession, is very encouraging. Were there by the grace of God no king upheld by England, North Germany would soon be united. I shall subscribe at once to the "D. Reform."<sup>1</sup> My best love to your wife and children. Your brother,

HELMUTH.

Magdeburg, March 21st, 1850.

DEAR ADOLF,

Our travelling plans may easily be upset by the events that lie hidden in the not very rosy lap of the coming year. It is, however, an immense improvement that we should only have to think of a foreign war. However domineering the tone of the Vienna Cabinet may be, Austria can hardly be in a position to take up arms against the work of German Union. The army in Bohemia is in the most miserable condition, Italy and Bohemia have to be kept in order by a considerable force, and the finances of the Empire give rise to the

<sup>1</sup> Deutsche Reform.

gravest anxiety. The situation in Russia, who does us all the harm she can in Copenhagen, is yet more serious. Still, if anything could prompt the German races to unite, it would be an attack on the part of Russia. But the real Pandora box of the whole affair is *la belle France* with her recent elections. France has the infinite misfortune to possess three dynasties. Louis Napoleon is apparently sincere in joining the majority against Socialism, but it is only the pressing danger from that quarter which can hold the majority together. As soon as there is any question of a definite and lasting plan of government the Legitimists and Orleanists will separate themselves from the Bonapartists. An attack from that quarter may occur from one day to another, and will, I am sorry to say, meet with sympathy in South Germany. Bavaria has armed herself, though no one quite sees what for. One thing only is certain, and that is, that her finances are in the worst possible condition. But all the reports in the newspapers about a gathering of the Prussian forces at Erfurt are totally unfounded. Only thirty gendarmes and a few special constables have been sent out, and

there is no intention whatever of assembling the troops. Even the first Landwehr regiment, which was stationed in Hamburg under General Döring's orders, has been sent back to the Mecklenburg frontier; from which it may be concluded that our Government has given up all further idea of an armed interference in Danish affairs. It really seems as though Holstein were to be occupied. If the Swedes withdraw now, what will happen in the Schleswig vacuum? Should the Danes advance, it will be impossible to restrain the Holsteiners, and it is very doubtful which is the stronger of the two. The Prussian officers will then be recalled, but at the prospect of a campaign many of them would certainly quit the service in order to stay where they are. Bonin has unquestionably the most to lose, but then he has also the greatest interest in the matter. If his campaign is successful they will forgive him everything. With Rendsburg and the impassable Eider at his back he can safely begin operations, and at any rate hold the country round, as far as Flensburg.

Further on than that, the position of Alsén on



his flank would make it dangerous for him, but so far he can move freely. The landing of the Danes further to the south might result in the towns on the coast being laid waste, but it would at the same time greatly endanger the troops, who could necessarily only be landed in small numbers. If no split occurs in the ranks of the Holsteiners, they may try to settle the question in a battle. Not that it would probably settle the question. The line of the Eider affords protection to the Holsteiners, for should the enemy cross it, the German armies would be justified in taking serious steps. The Danes will find their protection in Alsen, or in Jutland.\* It would be unwise of an inferior force to follow them there. Still, it would be of enormous moral value to the Duchies if they could show that they had the strength as well as the will to protect themselves against the Danes. There is something odious in saying to Holstein, "See how you can fight it out for yourself." But neither Holstein nor Denmark will accept conciliation on the terms which have been offered them. And even the assistance of Prussian troops would not bring matters to a

satisfactory conclusion, so long as we have no navy. Besides which, Prussia is just at a most critical point in her own development, and has to hold herself in readiness for an European war at any moment.

Parliament was opened in Erfurt to-day. They will honestly do their best to bring about the union. Should it succeed, the magnetic influence of an united and powerful German State must in a few years, and almost without an effort, bring about what two campaigns failed to effect ; the German population of Schleswig will join on rational grounds, against which political formulas are impotent to raise a barrier.

But this union will be opposed not only by the democrats, but by the oligarchy of the small principalities. If the representatives of the people really expressed the popular feeling, both these obstacles would fall to the ground. If there is one point in which Germany was sincere during the struggle of the last few years, it is in her desire for unity ; but this desire can make no way against particularism on the one hand and antagonism to social order on the other. I trust that

Prussia will keep her word, and go through with the attempt till there is obviously no possibility of success, and then be content to be nothing more than Prussia. There can hardly be any material advantage for Prussia to be got out of the proposed union. As for the small states, the result of the next political convulsion will be, either the overthrow of the monarchical principle altogether, or their complete absorption. If Prussia is then still in existence, she will profit by it.

Affectionately yours,

HELMUTH.

Magdeburg, May 29th, 1850.

DEAR ADOLF,

Under the present circumstances, I do not see much hope for Schleswig-Holstein. It is unfortunate that they could not have come to some conclusion sooner. General von Willisen is unquestionably a most intellectual and capable man, but he is a theorist. He is a better man for you than Bonin, because the Danes always knew that Bonin took his tone from Berlin. Willisen is burning to begin. I do not think that the dele-

gates from Holstein will achieve anything in Copenhagen now, and it will probably come to a conflict in Schleswig. If Willisen keeps his troops together and does not advance beyond Flensburg, so as to avoid having Alsen on his flank, nor permit his forces to be broken up for the protection of the coast line and the towns, the Danes may destroy a few places and carry off some prisoners; but the issue of a regular engagement would then be very doubtful, to say the least of it. Then, too, the matter would assume a totally different aspect if the Duchies actually proved that they could defend themselves. I am only afraid there will be learned manœuvres, and that their attention will be diverted from the chief object in view by the cries of the sufferers.

Yours,

HELMUTH.

Magdeburg, July 18th, 1850.

DEAR ADOLF,

. . . That is truly a strange peace<sup>2</sup> which has

<sup>2</sup> The peace of Berlin, between Prussia and Denmark, July 2nd, 1850.

for its immediate result a fresh outbreak of war. We are unfortunately obliged to confess that it discloses the fact of our having attempted something which we could not carry out. It is true that it only became impossible because one half of our common Fatherland took no part in it, while the other was notoriously against it ; true too that Prussia saved Holstein in one campaign, screened her in a second, and provided an army for the third. But our present position is nevertheless most distressing, after putting ourselves forward as the champion of Germany. With what bitter feelings our troops will have to withdraw ! With party spirit running so high, it will be impossible to prevent a collision between the opposing van-guards, and that will give the signal for a general struggle. The next few days must determine matters. I trust that Willisen will not allow himself to be persuaded to subdivide his troops, nor advance beyond Flensburg, but place himself there on the defensive and collect all his forces to await the attack. The issue then may be very uncertain. Should the Holsteiners be victorious, it would not bring matters to any conclusion, but they would gain an important

moral advantage, which would have its weight even with the great foreign Powers. If unhappy Germany can manage to combine to act honestly in concert, Prussia will not be behindhand. Our troops are stationed close to the Lauenburg frontier and near the railway. The projected London protocol will hurry on the union, if it is at all possible. It is a painful time.

July 26th.—If it is true that the Danes have spread themselves out from Fehmarn to Tönningen, and this not merely with outposts, while Willisen is stationed in Schleswig, the moment must have come for offensive operations. If the Danes avoid the attack, he can follow them up as far as Bau, and at least produce a good moral impression. But perhaps he will confine himself to acting on the defensive, since the Danes would be forced to attack him in order to bring matters to a conclusion ; for their flank position at Alsen is of no use to them so long as the Holsteiners do not advance beyond Bau. Willisen's right flank is well protected ; and to attack his left, or compel him to move, the Danes must break up their connection. Things have gone on all right so far, and the

maintenance of the armies in their present positions must cost the Danes at least as great sacrifices as the Holsteiners. It is a pity that the railway from Rendsburg has not been extended to Flensburg.—Everything that the Government there has done or decreed lately is, to me, quite satisfactory.

In Germany matters look very badly. That we should be going through a reaction is, to a certain point, not to be regretted. I cannot resist sending you the accompanying paper, which gives an admirable picture of the two principal aims of Prussia in her German policy : the effort to gain supremacy, and the exclusion of Austria from Germany if she were strong ; compromise and division if she were weak. In which position we now find ourselves, I leave you to judge. Yours,

HELMUTH.

Magdeburg, August 6th, 1850.

DEAR ADOLF,

Since my last letter the first throw has been cast, and to the disadvantage of Holstein.

That Germany should look on and take no part is painful and humiliating. I can understand this attitude if some great end in the world's history were to be gained by it. But when this end is not attained, not, as it would seem, even aimed at, the result must be hatred of Prussia, and contempt for those States which only raised miserable sums of money by way of help when soldiers only could be of any use. The Danes have now gone so far that they must appeal to the German Confederation to interfere. But where are they to look for it, at Frankfort, Vienna, or Berlin? The London protocol may yet perhaps shake us awake in Germany, but old Barbarossa sleeps soundly in the Kyffhäuser.

It is so very much easier to criticize than to act, that one should be shy of expressing an opinion. So far as can be judged from the meagre reports we have received, the battle of Idstedt seems to have been lost for want of a few battalions in the reserve of the centre. The position was very widely extended; the forces massed behind the right wing, which was the strongest part of the position. The intention



was to act there on the offensive; but thus nothing was left for defence against the attack which the enemy, as might have been foreseen, directed on the weak left wing. But how far the Holstein army was from being really beaten is proved, not only by the great loss among the Danes, but yet more by their not having taken a step in pursuit.

It does not seem to me likely that General Willisen will now intrench himself in Rendsburg with his troops. If he remains there, the Danes also will remain undivided, and he can neither support Friedrichsort nor protect Kiel. I fancied he might advance on Flemhude and Kleine Nordsee, holding the passages over the Eider and the canal. The Danes must then leave forces in Schleswig, Eckernförde, etc., to cover Rendsburg, and so weaken themselves considerably. It would be very rash to besiege Friedrichsort or march on Kiel so long as an unbeaten army is within an easy march of Gottorp. There is nothing to be done but to attack the army itself, and in its present place it has a strong defensive position, a front to the

east and west, according to whether the enemy crosses the Eider above or below it. The railway brings up supplies almost to the spot.

Now or never negotiations must be opened. If the Danes adhere to the insane view of regarding the Germans as insurgents, it must be their task to annihilate these insurgents, and every step they take into Holstein will make this more difficult.

My departure, with that of the black horse, was fixed for yesterday. But so many of my officers have been taken away, that I have first to reorganize my staff. I should also like to see first what is really being done, for it seems that some decision has been arrived at. The tension with Austria increases daily. They are paying us out for what we did *not* do to them in 1848. Still, I do not yet believe in war with Austria. Two great powers can always find a way to an arrangement, at the expense of the weak and presumptuous. The real conflict will, to be sure, be thus only postponed. Besides, Austria has hitherto had the best of this negative attitude. Difficulties will grow to gigantic proportions

as soon as she is compelled to act, nay, as soon as she has to put forward a practical programme.

Out of all this confusion I am glad to transport myself into your peaceful home, which, please God, is not endangered. I rejoice that none of Augusta's relatives have suffered this time. I hope too that you will now soon have the horse. I am sending you a perfectly new saddle, an old *Kandare* and a good *Woilach*.<sup>3</sup>

HELMUTH.

Magdeburg, November 4th, 1850.

DEAR ADOLF,

Since midday yesterday the peace of Europe no longer depends on the conferences of Ministers, but on the attitude of a patrol party of Hussars. The Prussians and Bavarians must have come into collision in the neighbourhood of Saalmünster. A few carbine-shots could easily be fired into the German powder-barrel and blow all the subtleties of politics to the winds. There must be something very perverse about our diplomacy, that every step forward

<sup>3</sup> Bit and horse-rug.

should lead us further into ruin. Soon there will scarcely be any choice but between humiliation and war under very difficult circumstances—a war in which we must keep a front to East, North and South, and in which we shall not have an ally in the world. Happy is he who in this juncture has not to decide, but only to obey. Two days ago war seemed a certainty. To-day we are doubtful, and every hour which does not bring the order for mobilization makes war less likely. But how we are to get out of all the negotiations already set on foot, with anything approaching to honour, I cannot see. The struggle which is dreaded and postponed by all parties must surely break out at the New Year. Griesheim is now Commandant of Coblenz; we shall soon hear something of him.

My General<sup>4</sup> remembers you with sincere regard, and is always glad to hear of you. There is a great deal to arrange and prepare here; for, with all the separate despatches, and forming a corps out of troops thrown together from different

<sup>4</sup> Lieutenant-General von Hedemann, for a time in command of the IVth Army Corps.

provinces, the difficult business of mobilizing an army becomes extremely complicated. I only hope they will not be ordered out till it is quite decided that we are to fight. Demonstrations cost Prussia millions of thalers, and lead to nothing. There is too much talking. Deeds are what are wanted. The Holstein business is still the worst of all. But enough of that. Matters are now so involved that a decision cannot be delayed much longer. Yours,

HELMUTH.

Magdeburg, February 25th, 1851.

DEAR ADOLF,

I cannot bear to write of politics; the unworthy part we are being made to play cannot last much longer. As yet, I have never really believed in war; but now I think we must have war within the year. A more disgraceful peace was never signed. And such an army as we had collected! For twenty-four weeks the IVth Army Corps was mobilized, and brought out of all the garrisons. And such troops! If only Frederick the Great had had such men! Thirty millions (of

thalers) are gone for a demonstration, and to accept any and every condition. But the worst Government cannot ruin this nation ; Prussia will stand yet at the head of Germany. An union of the *Zollverband* (after the secession of the South Germans) with the *Steuerverein*<sup>5</sup> is what I hope for. In Holstein, for the moment, all is lost, but the question must be re-opened. Still, it must be true that a more pitiable nation than the Germans does not exist on earth.

Mobilization and demobilization have given me much to do, but the result was satisfactory ; all that was needed was the will to make use of it, if not, indeed, to make war against all Europe (for our diplomacy had brought us to that), at any rate to negotiate under arms. But we seem to have called out all the strength of the State merely to submit to humiliating conditions. Dissatisfaction is universal and very serious. If victory over Democracy bears such fruit, we had almost better conjure it into life again. But this will not be necessary. Yours,

HELMUTH.

<sup>5</sup> The toll-union with the tax-union.

Magdeburg, December 22nd, 1851.

DEAR ADOLF,

Marie sends you her love. She has some wonderful surprise in store for me for Christmas, and for weeks already she has been burning so to tell it that she has had the greatest difficulty in keeping it to herself. As news for Augusta, tell her that I have got for Marie a dark brown velvet bonnet with camellias, a very handsome, thick Lyons silk dress, *gros grain* with a damask pattern, and a *beige* morning-gown, dark brown, mixed silk and wool. Yours,

HELMUTH.

Magdeburg, January 1st, 1852.

DEAR ADOLF,

Marie has had the much talked-of fur waistcoat made for me, and I have given her a beaming lamp, which completely lights up our drawing-room, which is now a picture-gallery. A carpet, double windows, and portières make it a habitable room. I wish you could pay us a few days' visit here. Yours,

HELMUTH.

Magdeburg, January 23rd, 1853.

DEAR ADOLF,

The superficial reconciliation of Austria and Prussia might, perhaps, impose on the Copenhagen Government some consideration for the Duchies ; though, indeed, it will set no bounds to its revenge on individuals, as its proceedings against poor Krohn show only too plainly. No real help is to be expected, unless from a rising of the German nation, and that would mean a general war, for which Louis Napoleon will probably provide within a few years. His empire assumes more and more of the character of a magnificent swindle. His marriage with this Spaniard completely excludes him from admission into the list of legitimately Royal Families ; and the London Stock Exchange, by simply raising the rate of exchange, can overthrow his whole system of finance. The French must soon weary of this adventurer, who will find it harder to remain than to become Emperor. He can scarcely hold his place without some victories, and whether he is himself a general, and that on the pattern of his uncle, remains to be proved. But he must fight



and win his own battles, or his General will be  
Emperor.

Affectionately yours,

HELMUTH.

Magdeburg, March 4th, 1853.

DEAR ADOLF,

Things look more peaceful on the whole than they have done for long. The Eastern crisis is not, indeed, by any means settled, but it is staved off. What is most important in it is Napoleon's attitude. If war were what he aimed at, he here had a favourable chance of fighting in alliance with England. But he seems really to desire peace. The only question is how long he can preserve it in the face of the people and the army. The commercial treaty, just concluded between Austria and Prussia, is also of great political importance. As neither of these two great German powers has succeeded in seizing the sole supremacy in Germany, they have for a time come to an understanding. This has the great advantage, as regards foreign nations, that one half of Germany will no longer paralyze the other, as was the case during the Holstein business; and it may

be hoped that the Confederation will now take somewhat more decisive steps against the pretensions of Denmark. The mischief done cannot, of course, be undone, and Holstein will scarcely yet be induced to join the *Steuerverein*. In this respect the Elbe will still divide that fair land from Germany. Nothing can bring it back but a general rising of the German nation; but the ravens are still croaking round the Kyffhäuser, and old Barbarossa still sleeps. Yours,

HELMUTH.

Magdeburg, June 4th, 1853.

DEAR ADOLF,

It was with sincere sorrow that I received the news of your poor little Frederica's death, dear, sweet child. Augusta too, writes that she accompanied you to the railway, and now, after a short stay together in Ratzeburg, she is snatched from you and your poor stricken wife and us all. God comfort you and preserve the other children, if the dreadful sickness takes a malignant form! But God gives and takes away, and we must be comforted to know that nothing happens but

according to His will, however deeply such a dispensation may grieve the parents.

How truly Marie and 'Guste sympathize with you I need not say. They will both write to Augusta, but I want to tell you at once how much this unexpected sad news has grieved us all. I can give you no comfort, nor can anyone, but only your own religious feeling and trust in God, which will not be shaken but confirmed by misfortune. May God comfort you and help you through the first bitter days! Your affectionate and faithful brother,

HELMUTH.

Magdeburg, January 25th, 1854.

DEAR ADOLF,

Political affairs look critical. To me, the German powers seem to be playing a very poor part. Any fresh increase of Russian power is to them evidently a serious peril, and yet they are leaving to the Western powers the task of snatching the chestnuts out of the fire. This will be remembered against us, and will not improve the esteem in which Europe holds us. The Turks

seem quite to understand that their religion and existence as a nation are at stake. They are fighting beyond all expectation, and even on the offensive. In pitched battle they would nevertheless be beaten, but it will be difficult to bring them to that. Operations on a grand scale cannot begin there before June. But the smaller Russia's chances are, without the control of the Black Sea, the more likely is it that the struggle will be transferred to a quite different field.

'The Czar's decision must be known in the immediate future. To judge from his character, it can hardly be doubtful ;' though well-informed people believe in a peaceful issue. Affectionately yours,

HELMUTH.

Magdeburg, April 6th, 1854.

DEAR ADOLF,

It is greatly to be wished that no large payments should at present be necessary ; the low exchange on paper is of no consequence so long as one is not obliged to part with it. This crisis

cannot last long. The obstinacy of the Czar has almost succeeded already in bringing all Europe round to one mind, If he goes on thus the grand coercive measure of the reconstitution of Poland must be taken into consideration. I do not believe in the new proposals for peace from St. Petersburg; it strikes me as a last attempt to gain over the German powers, more especially Prussia; but things have gone too far. The assembling of a considerable army on our part appears to me a very likely event, and the matter must end either by Russia being thrown back on Asia, or—by a division of Turkey. The recognition of the equality of Christians and Mussulmans is practically the dissolution of the Mussulman rule. Affectionately yours,

HELMUTH.

Magdeburg, October 29th, 1854.

DEAR ADOLF,

What reflex effect the present political situation may have on the Duchies, it is impossible as yet to foresee. At any rate, the Western powers perceive what a political blunder

it would be to establish a succession in Denmark which would favour Russia only.

It is said that in return for the active support of the Western powers afforded to Sweden and Germany, a division of the kingdom is in prospect. We certainly shall not engage in any such risks. As it seems to me, the only conceivable possibility is at an end : a firm alliance between Austria, Prussia and the Confederation, for the steady maintenance of neutrality and mediation for peace, or, if this is impossible, for taking up arms against either the East or the West. Sebastopol will in all probability fall within a few days. The town, the docks, arsenals and fleet will be destroyed, the northern forts not even entered, and the forces withdrawn. Russia will have suffered a great moral defeat and a not less serious material beating. The fleet in the Black Sea cannot be restored under twenty years ; the permanent threat to Constantinople is annulled ; the Caucasus reinforced for resistance. The Western powers may be all the more content with this result, because, without Austria and Prussia, they could hardly aim at any greater issue, and it will

be a hard task to fight against Russia and Germany in union. Next spring must bring some decision. Yours,

HELMUTH.

Magdeburg, March 5th, 1855.

DEAR ADOLF,

The death of the Czar<sup>6</sup> is one of those events in which one fancies one sees the direct ruling of Providence. What its outcome may be lies as yet in total darkness; possibly a complete revolution in politics. His last coherent words were spoken to the Empress: "Dites à Fritz que je compte sur lui pour la Russie, et que je lui rappelle les dernières paroles de Papa!"

In response to this appeal, the King has telegraphed to Alexander II., and received a suitable answer.

The Empress's health remains good, and the task of keeping the peace between her two eldest sons will maintain it. The Czar belongs to the moderate German party; Nesselrode, Orlov and the Grand-Duke Constantine to the extreme

\* <sup>6</sup> Nicholas I., who died on March 2nd, 1855.

Russian war-party. But it is a question whether even the deceased Czar, a man without his match in Europe, was not carried further by that party than he wished, and whether the new Czar will be able to stand against it. Louis Napoleon's journey to the Crimea, which, improbable as it seemed, is nevertheless a fact, points to a definite war policy on the part of France. Matters look badly at Sebastopol. I do not believe in its being taken by storm. All the courage in the world will not enable a man to run up a wall. How the question might be settled in the field is very doubtful, the Allies lacking cavalry ; and the results of a defeat incalculable. Affectionately yours,

HELMUTH.

Magdeburg, July 4th, 1855.

DEAR ADOLF,

Slaughter is still going on in the Crimea, and no one knows what is the object to be attained. The great reductions in Austria have brought her practically to the Prussian standpoint of neutrality. God grant the German powers may honestly hold together ! A force of 500,000 men.



ready to fight, whether in the East or West, are a weight which may, perhaps, save the scale from turning on the side of a general European war, of which the first act might be the restoration of Poland and revolution in Hungary, Italy, and Germany.

I have just made a very interesting tour with the Crown Prince through the Prussian provinces. The gigantic work of bridging over the Weichsel [the Vistula] is really amazing. Five piers, as large as a village church, support a lattice-work 40 feet high, which from a distance looks like a salt-factory. The open space between the piers, over which the roadway hangs, is 360 feet. The Nogat is bridged over in the same way. Wherever we went we found well-preserved traces of the powerful rule of the Teutonic Order of Knighthood. There is not in the world such another castle as that of Marienburg, the residence of the Grand Master. In almost every town the castles of the commanders and governors are still to be seen. The original Prussian population, on the other hand, is either extinct, or has migrated. The introduction of Christianity by the Polish Dukes went on from the martyrdom of Saint Adalbert,

for two hundred years till the Teutonic Knights were called in. The Order fought for the possession of the country for fifty years, and the primitive race, with its language and monuments, has totally vanished, leaving only a few pots and weapons. The occupation of a tract of country was asserted by the erection of a stronghold, under whose protection German settlements grew up. Only two families—those of Kalnein and Perbandt—can prove their genuine Prussian origin; those of Dohna, Lehndorff, Dönhoff, Waldburg, and others are descended from the Knights. In its prime, the Order was a sovereign power, after Siegfried von Feuchtwangen transferred the residence of the Grand Masters from Venice to Marienburg; and the Kniprode, Jungingen, Aldenburg, and Reuss held sway with a mighty hand, though by dint of constant fighting. The towns which afterwards seceded from the Order bear the stamp of their Hanseatic origin. Dantzic is one of the most beautiful towns I know. It greatly reminds me of Lübeck, but surpasses it in size, beauty, and wealth. The neighbourhood is charming; hills from three to five hundred feet high

with dense woods, the noble river, the luxuriant lowland and the sea, combine to form a lovely country. I was also much interested in seeing the splendid stud-farm of Trakehnen, and the depôts for army remounts at Jurgaitschen, NeuhoF, &c. One rarely sees so many fine horses together; at Trakehnen there are above a thousand mares and foals. Yours,

HELMUTH.

Berlin, October 27th, 1855.

DEAR ADOLF,

. . . . My present address is, Colonel von Moltke, first private Adjutant to his Royal Highness Prince Frederick William of Prussia, Berlin. My young prince is a most amiable and promising youth; and that is the most important point in my position. Otherwise I should not have sought court circles, and often find myself in a difficult position. I shall see how long I can go on with it. The journey to Scotland was most interesting. This evening I have just returned from Letzlingen, where, in two days, we killed above three hundred head of deer and more than a hundred pigs.

A very serious business lies before me, namely, to purchase horses, and then a black, a grey, a red, and a mixed suit, for my travels, for stag-hunting, battue-shooting, and court company. Affectionately yours,

HELMUTH.

Berlin,<sup>7</sup> December 12th, 1855.

DEAR ADOLF,

We are living here in a part of the city of which you can only have seen the first beginnings. It now contains the finest houses in the town. Close to us runs the new Schiffahrtsgraben (formerly called Schafgraben), through which the very considerable traffic now passes by water, which formerly went through the town and choked the bridges. Wide quays planted with double rows of trees border the canal, forming a very pleasant ride leading by the Thiergarten to Charlottenburg. At the New Year this is a great convenience, and the horses are off the pavement at once.

<sup>7</sup> Colonel von Moltke was then living at No. 9/10 Schönebergerstrasse.

The war question I am sorry to say still remains open this year again. The Russians will not evacuate the Peninsula, and there is no basis for peace negotiations. The Allies are fixed in the Tauric Chersonese, at very close quarters and, as it were, besieged by the Russians. Their position is very strong and hard to take, their supplies are secured by the possession of the harbours of Balaklava and Kamiesh, but they cannot get out. In my opinion there is no alternative left to them but to land again at Eupatoria at the New Year, to win another battle on the Alma, and then take advantage of the victory, whereas they took none of the first, to their very great loss. They can make no terms till they are masters of the Crimea.

It almost looks as if a serious attack was to be attempted in the Gulf of Finland. Of nine army corps the Russians have one in Asia and five in the Crimea. From Finland all the way to Poland they have but three corps, and besides these a considerable force of newly formed troops (Depôt battalions and Druschines<sup>a</sup>). The fitting out of a large number of floating batteries with very

<sup>a</sup> Or Droojina, Russian Militia.

long range guns might prove dangerous even to Cronstadt.

The King's last speech proclaimed the maintenance of Prussia's neutrality. Yours,

HELMUTH.

Berlin, December 12th, 1857.

DEAR ADOLF,

The state of our finance and credit is sufficiently shown by the unshaken currency of German paper. The Ministry advised the offer of a loan of four millions to the town of Hamburg. There was a moment's hesitation on the ground of responsibility to the Chambers, and now—Austria is lending it, that Austria who is selling her railways and reducing her army to cover her annual deficit! This is how we in Germany allow ourselves to be outflanked.

The Danes at this moment have fallen on evil times. The foreign powers seem to have no mind to stand up for them, and if, this time, Austria and Prussia act in concert, they will be wise to give in. But it is not State prudence which rules at Copenhagen, but party passion. Yours,

HELMUTH.

Berlin, December 19th, 1857.

DEAR ADOLF,

With regard to Holstein, I am inclined to think that they must make up their minds to a real concession. Austria and Prussia, and consequently the Confederation, are this time agreed, and in the present aspect of politics, foreign support can scarcely be hoped for against decisive measures on the part of Germany. Even England seems to have got over her complete illusions with regard to this question. At the same time, the party at the head of affairs in Copenhagen is powerful, popular, and regardless of consequences ; so it is impossible to tell what may happen.

With regard to Austria's financial aid to Hamburg, matters are as follows : The circulation of all Government paper money is there compulsory ; bullion is therefore lying perfectly idle in the bank, and it is quite legitimate business to draw out 600,000 florins interest per annum. The credit of Austrian paper will, however, not be improved by it. With us, on the contrary, the bank is obliged to keep an equivalent in silver of one third of all the paper in circulation. For the four millions ready cash,

sent to Hamburg, twelve millions of paper must have been withdrawn, which seemed a risk in the crisis which affected Prussia as well. For Hamburg this business is still a doubtful success. It is an open question, whether the reckless operations are not too extensive to be met even by this loan. In 1854, Hamburg's import and export amounted to 300 millions, I believe, and in 1856 to 600 millions. The possible losses attending the issue of a ten million loan, as well as the interest, must be borne by the Senate, and eventually by the tax-payers. Thus the whole population is called upon to pay, to save their great merchants from possible bankruptcy. \* The great money crisis has, however, one good result in the general fall of prices. This is already felt, and I hope will continue. The value of money has risen, and as this is a fixed amount, which cannot be increased at will (the substitute not having proved satisfactory), more commodities can be purchased for the same money. The good harvest has also helped. Rye, which formerly cost fifty-six, nay even sixty, can to-day be purchased at thirty-eight.



There is no doubt about a real and steady improvement in the King's health. The marriage of the young Prince Frederick William, whom I shall probably accompany on his visit to England, has been postponed till January 25th of next year, so the Prince of Prussia may possibly be able to be present at the ceremony. It is, however, quite impossible to foresee as yet whether the King will then be in a condition to resume government, with all its burthens, excitement and anxiety. I have not seen his Majesty since the morning of the 7th of November, when he was taken ill. All business, so far, has been withheld from him, but he has seen many of the persons who are in his confidence, from whom he heard of the death of General Reyher, of Rauch the sculptor, and other events that have happened during his illness. He principally occupies himself with his favourite study, plans for buildings. Stüler, Humboldt, Groeben, Dohna, Kleist and others have seen him. The last-named tells me that he has changed but little.

The task of the Prince of Prussia is one of infinite difficulty; having to carry on the

Government on the lines hitherto laid down and with the instruments at hand, so that in many instances he is probably forced to renounce his own principles. The self-denial and tact displayed by him are generally admired, but all the freshness of a new Government has been wanting. A definite scheme is most desirable, but if the King should not fully recover under the Queen's most loving and skilful care, it is an extremely delicate business.

As to myself, I have been appointed "to undertake the business of the Chief of the General Staff of the Army," since the death of my honoured predecessor. As this position is properly that of a General of Division, and I hold only the rank of Major-General, this appointment can only be temporary. I still wear the scarlet collar of the Infantry uniform; my salary too is 800 thalers less than that due to the position in the Staff. Otherwise, I have all the functions and attributes of the Chief; an official residence, general orders, and so forth. My force consists of 64 men, among them 50 of the so-called "Grand," but in reality very small,

General Staff, and the Staffs of the nine Army Corps and eighteen Divisions. The funds appropriated to the department amount to 26,000 thalers for general purposes, over which I have full control, out of which I have to pay for the trigonometrical and topographical survey of the country. In this I have at my command a corps of 30 officers, drawn from the army; I have also 10,000 thalers for travelling expenses. At the beginning I was obliged to work very hard in order to acquaint myself with the duties of my office; with the business and the *personnel*. This last is of great importance, not only for the good of the Corps itself, but especially for that of the Army. Yours,

HELMUTH.

No date. (July 1859.)

DEAR ADOLF,

So peace is concluded between the two Catholic Emperors. The long and short of it is, Austria would rather give up Lombardy than see Prussia at the head of Germany.

Indeed, Germany came very near establishing

the dangerous precedent of a real unification. Revolutionary despotism and reactionary conservatism have an equal interest in preventing this. The 2nd of December gave up its programme, and Francis Joseph a province, in order to establish an Italian Federation after the fashion of the German Confederation, and this at the moment when the conviction was stronger than ever, that the German Confederation was a hindrance in time of peace and a menace in war. The future will show whether the Italian Federation is anything but a way of leaving the question open. The Austrian Emperor, as member of two such Confederations, may get entangled in some curious complications.

Germany, unhappy Germany, has exhibited to the world the miserable spectacle of individual interests triumphing over strongly roused national feeling. Whose fault is this?

If Austria had wanted us for an ally, she might have had us long ago. She wanted us as vassals, unconditionally, and without any return; nay without any security that she would not make peace at the very moment when we had declared war.

No wonder that it was insisted that we could not enter on a war in defence of misgovernment in Italy, of the Concordat and the police system, when it must necessarily begin with an attack on the French in France. What were we to tell the people that the war was for? It would be calling the people rather than the army of France out to fight. We—Germany—were neither attacked nor threatened in any way. Not even an army of observation was sent out against us. Could anything be said in a war-manifesto, but that war was entered on to avert a possible future danger, that it was war against the lasting strength of the most powerful State in the world, which threatened our existence? The attitude of Prussia and Germany made it possible for Austria to assemble her entire army in Italy, though she declared, on the "Bundestag," her willingness to do even more than she was pledged to as an allied power. Was that army not enough to defend her interests in Italy? Excepting half of her XIIth Corps in Galicia, two cavalry corps and the Reserves, her whole army was concentrated in Italy, and practically nothing left for Germany. And with all

this, the haughty demeanour of the diplomates, and the reference to Olmütz.

But the contrary view has found some supporters. Prussia's very existence is endangered by any war with one of her great neighbours. We have no allies. England has no army, and the Russian forces are 400 miles [about 1870 English miles] from the Rhine frontier. Aid from Russia could only arrive when all is over. No ally could do us the service which Austria does us—not for love of us—by engaging 200,000 French at a seat of war 100 miles [about 468 English miles] away. We do not want to fight for Austria, but with her, solely for our own interests. Russia is less able to interfere with us in this matter than she ever has been, or perhaps will be again. England, which absolutely needs a strong continental power, will declare herself as soon as we act.

We had to choose between these two views. A difficult choice. It was made. The mobilization of six corps was ordered, and the order for mobilizing the remaining three was drawn out. Their transportation by railway was fully prepared for, the troops were *en route* for the different

points whence they were to start. The transport was to begin on the 15th of this month. The rolling stock was collected from all the railways of the country on the three lines. Anyone who knows the organization of the Prussian army and Landwehr, knows that we cannot dawdle with it; when once it is assembled it must proceed to action.

Neither the battle of Solferino, nor even the armistice, made any change in the plans which the Prussian Government had decided upon. Prince Windischgrätz declared on the 8th July that the Emperor would not yield one foot of territory, not one single prerogative in Italy; and yet on the 7th the armistice had already been concluded "for the purpose of negotiations."

Austria was convinced that Prussia was bent on war, that the advance of 400,000 Germans would force the Emperor Napoleon to withdraw a considerable part of his army from Italy to France, and that thus she might conquer his provinces of Lombardy and Piedmont; but she was also aware of the motion made to the Confederation on July 4th,<sup>9</sup> and—peace was concluded.

<sup>9</sup> On the 4th of July the Prussian envoy proposed in the

Prussia missed a great opportunity. Only four weeks ago we might have placed ourselves at the head of all Germany. It has been very shrewdly remarked, that Prussia proposed as a condition of her taking action, that which appears to be the natural *consequence* of her action. In doing so she exposed herself to danger, but great historical transformations cannot be effected without danger.

Now we are left entirely to ourselves, and I am convinced that we shall prepare for coming events with all possible care and diligence. But that our situation will soon be more favourable in a political and military sense than in the immediate past, I very much doubt.

A bold resolution can only be the act of one man. At a meeting of many the *pros* and *cons* of a matter are always discussed with so many good and indisputable arguments on each side that one nullifies the other. Every definite proposal is met by the most incontestable difficulties, negative views prevail, and all meet on

General Assembly that his king should be entrusted with the supreme command of the German allied armies in the war then impending.



the neutral ground of inaction. It needs a Frederick the Great to take no advice and to act solely on his own responsibility.

Until after the Prussian question has been studied, an interval of quietude has set in, contrary to all expectation, and I hope to be able to visit Gastein next month for a much needed course of waters. Marie, of course, goes with me. Afterwards, in September, we want to make a trip to the high Alps. Yours,

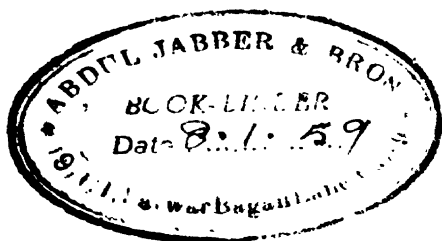
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